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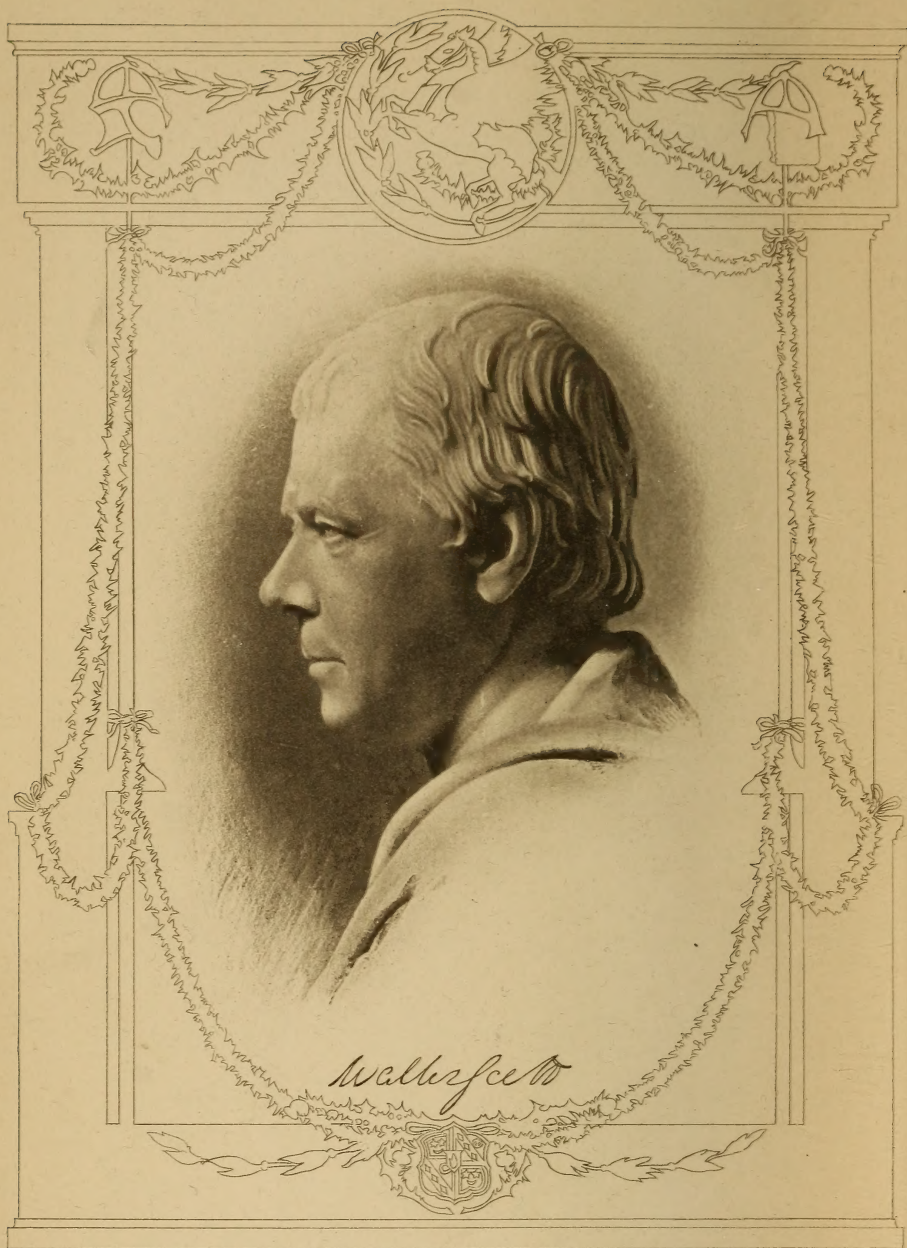
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SCOTT'S POEMS

Cabinet Edition



THE COMPLETE POËTICAL
WORKS OF
SIR WALTER SCOTT

Cabinet Edition



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

WHEN Dr. Rolfe edited *The Poetical Works of Sir Walter Scott, Baronet*, in 1877, he made a critical examination of the several texts, with the result of discovering many errors and inconsistencies in the current editions. His own text may be taken as the most accurate and trustworthy of any extant; and it has been used as the basis of both the Cambridge and Cabinet editions of Scott's Poems. But in preparing the Cambridge edition the editor thought best to include the poems which Dr. Rolfe had omitted, and also to follow an order of arrangement which was quite strictly chronological. This Cabinet edition is thus a reproduction of the text of the Cambridge edition, and with that may be regarded as the only really complete edition of Scott's poems contained in a single volume. By using a clear though small type, and studying the proportions of the page and the quality of the paper, it has been possible to bring the entire contents within the scope of a small handy volume.

BOSTON, *Spring*, 1900.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TWO BALLADS FROM THE GERMAN OF BÜRGER.

WILLIAM AND HELEN, IMITATED FROM THE 'LENORÉ' OF BÜRGER	1
THE WILD HUNTSMAN, IMITATED FROM BÜRGER'S 'WILDE JÄGER'	5

EARLY BALLADS AND LYRICS.

THE VIOLET	9
TO A LADY WITH FLOWERS FROM A ROMAN WALL	9
THE ERL-KING, FROM THE GERMAN OF GOETHE	9
WAR SONG OF THE ROYAL EDINBURGH LIGHT DRAGOONS	10
SONG FROM 'GOETZ VON BERLICHINGEN'	11
SONGS FROM 'THE HOUSE OF ASPEN.'	
I. 'JOY TO THE VICTORS, THE SONS OF OLD ASPEN'	11
II. 'SWEET SHONE THE SUN ON THE FAIR LAKE OF TORO'	12
III. RHEIN-WEIN LIED ('WHAT MAKES THE TROOPERS' FROZEN COURAGE MUSTER?')	12
GLENFINLAS, OR LORD RONALD'S CORONACH	13
THE EVE OF ST. JOHN	18
THE GRAY BROTHER	21
THE FIRE-KING	23
BOTHWELL CASTLE	27
THE SHEPHERD'S TALE	27
CHEVIOT	30
FREDERICK AND ALICE	31
CADYOW CASTLE, ADDRESSED TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE LADY ANNE HAMILTON	32

THE REIVER'S WEDDING	36
CHRISTIE'S WILL	38
THOMAS THE RHYMER	40
THE BARD'S INCANTATION, WRITTEN UNDER THE THREAT OF INVASION IN THE AUTUMN OF 1804.	46
HELLVELLYN	47

THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL.

INTRODUCTION	48
CANTO FIRST	50
CANTO SECOND	56
CANTO THIRD	64
CANTO FOURTH	71
CANTO FIFTH	82
CANTO SIXTH	91

MARMION: A TALE OF FLODDEN FIELD.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO FIRST	101
CANTO FIRST: THE CASTLE	107
INTRODUCTION TO CANTO SECOND	115
CANTO SECOND: THE CONVENT	119
INTRODUCTION TO CANTO THIRD	129
CANTO THIRD: THE HOSTEL, OR INN	133
INTRODUCTION TO CANTO FOURTH	143
CANTO FOURTH: THE CAMP	147
INTRODUCTION TO CANTO FIFTH	157
CANTO FIFTH: THE COURT	160
INTRODUCTION TO CANTO SIXTH	176
CANTO SIXTH: THE BATTLE	180
L'ENVOY	198

THE LADY OF THE LAKE.

CANTO FIRST: THE CHASE	199
CANTO SECOND: THE ISLAND	212
CANTO THIRD: THE GATHERING	226
CANTO FOURTH: THE PROPHECY	239

CANTO FIFTH: THE COMBAT	252	THE PALMER	547
CANTO SIXTH: THE GUARD- ROOM	267	THE MAID OF NEIDPATH	548
THE VISION OF DON RODER- ICK.		WANDERING WILLIE	548
INTRODUCTION	283	HEALTH TO LORD MELVILLE	549
THE VISION OF DON RODERICK	286	HUNTING SONG	551
CONCLUSION	298	SONG: 'O, SAY NOT, MY LOVE'	551
ROKEYB.		THE RESOLVE (IN IMITATION OF AN OLD ENGLISH POEM)	552
● CANTO FIRST	302	EPITAPH DESIGNED FOR A MON- UMENT IN LITCHFIELD CATHE- DRAL, AT THE BURIAL-PLACE OF THE FAMILY OF MISS SEW- ARD	552
CANTO SECOND	315	PROLOGUE TO MISS BAILLIE'S PLAY OF 'THE FAMILY LE- GEND'	553
CANTO THIRD	327	THE POACHER (WRITTEN IN IMI- TATION OF CRABBE)	553
CANTO FOURTH	339	THE BOLD DRAGOON; OR, THE PLAIN OF BADAJOS	557
CANTO FIFTH	352	ON THE MASSACRE OF GLENCOE	557
CANTO SIXTH	368	SONG FOR THE ANNIVERSARY MEETING OF THE PITT CLUB OF SCOTLAND	558
THE BRIDAL OF TRIERMAIN; OR, THE VALE OF SAINT JOHN.		LINES ADDRESSED TO RANALD MACDONALD, ESQ., OF STAFFA	559
INTRODUCTION	384	PHAROS LOQUITUR.	560
CANTO FIRST	386	LETTERS IN VERSE ON THE VOY- AGE WITH THE COMMISSIONERS OF NORTHERN LIGHTS. TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH	560
CANTO SECOND	393	POSTSCRIPTUM	562
INTRODUCTION TO CANTO THIRD	405	SONGS AND VERSES FROM WA- VERLEY.	
CANTO THIRD	406	I. 'AND DID YE NOT HEAR OF A MIRTH BEFELL'.	563
CONCLUSION	420	II. 'LATE WHEN THE AUTUMN EVENING FELL'	564
THE LORD OF THE ISLES.		III. 'THE KNIGHT'S TO THE MOUNTAIN'.	564
CANTO FIRST	421	IV. 'IT'S UP GLEMBARCHAN'S BRAES I GAED'	564
CANTO SECOND	432	V. 'HIE AWAY, HIE AWAY'	565
CANTO THIRD	442	VI. ST. SWITHIN'S CHAIR	565
CANTO FOURTH	454	VII. 'YOUNG MEN WILL LOVE THEE MORE FAIR AND MORE FAST'	566
CANTO FIFTH	466	VIII. FLORA MACIVOR'S SONG	566
CANTO SIXTH	480	IX. TO AN OAK TREE	567
CONCLUSION	495	X. 'WE ARE BOUND TO DRIVE THE BULLOCKS'	568
THE FIELD OF WATERLOO.	496		
CONCLUSION	504		
HAROLD THE DAUNTLESS.			
INTRODUCTION	506		
CANTO FIRST	507		
CANTO SECOND	514		
CANTO THIRD	520		
CANTO FOURTH	526		
CANTO FIFTH	532		
CANTO SIXTH	538		
CONCLUSION	545		
MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.			
THE DYING BARD	546		
THE NORMAN HORSE-SHOE	546		
THE MAID OF TORO	547		

XI. 'BUT FOLLOW, FOLLOW ME' . . .	568
FOR A' THAT AN' A' THAT . . .	568
FAREWELL TO MACKENZIE, HIGH CHIEF OF KINTAIL . . .	569
IMITATION OF THE PRECEDING SONG . . .	570
WAR-SONG OF LACHLAN, HIGH CHIEF OF MACLEAN . . .	570
SAINT CLOUD . . .	571
THE DANCE OF DEATH . . .	571
ROMANCE OF DUNOIS . . .	574
THE TROUBADOUR . . .	574
FROM THE FRENCH . . .	575
SONG ON THE LIFTING OF THE BANNER OF THE HOUSE OF BUCCLEUCH AT A GREAT FOOT-BALL MATCH ON CARTER-HAUGH . . .	575
SONGS FROM GUY MANNERING.	
I. 'CANNY MOMENT, LUCKY FIT' . . .	576
II. 'TWIST YE, TWINE YE! EVEN SO' . . .	576
III. 'WASTED, WEARY, WHEREFORE STAY' . . .	576
IV. 'DARK SHALL BE LIGHT' . . .	577
LULLABY OF AN INFANT CHIEF . . .	577
THE RETURN TO ULSTER . . .	577
JOCK OF HAZELDEAN . . .	578
PIBROCH OF DONALD DHU . . .	578
NORA'S VOW . . .	579
MACGREGOR'S GATHERING . . .	579
VERSES SUNG AT THE DINNER GIVEN TO THE GRAND DUKE NICHOLAS OF RUSSIA AND HIS SUITE, 19TH DECEMBER, 1816 . . .	580
VERSES FROM THE ANTIQUARY.	
I. 'HE CAME, BUT VALOR HAD SO FIRED HIS EYE' . . .	581
II. 'WHY SIT'ST THOU BY THAT RUINED HALL' . . .	581
III. EPITAPH . . .	581
IV. 'THE HERRING LOVES THE MERRY MOON-LIGHT' . . .	581
THE SEARCH AFTER HAPPINESS; OR, THE QUEST OF SULTAUN SOLIMAUN . . .	582
LINES WRITTEN FOR MISS SMITH . . .	589
MR. KEMBLE'S FAREWELL ADDRESS ON TAKING LEAVE OF THE EDINBURGH STAGE . . .	590
THE SUN UPON THE WEIRDLAW HILL . . .	591

SONG FROM ROB ROY—TO THE MEMORY OF EDWARD THE BLACK PRINCE . . .	591
THE MONKS OF BANGOR'S MARCH . . .	592
EPILOGUE TO THE APPEAL . . .	593
MACKRIMMON'S LAMENT . . .	593
DONALD CAIRD'S COME AGAIN . . .	594
MADGE WILDFIRE'S SONGS FROM THE HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN . . .	595
THE BATTLE OF SEMPACH . . .	596
THE NOBLE MORINGER . . .	599
EPITAPH ON MRS. ERSKINE . . .	603
SONGS FROM THE BRIDE OF LAM-MERMOOR.	
I. 'LOOK NOT THOU ON BEAUTY'S CHARMING' . . .	603
II. 'THE MONK MUST ARISE WHEN THE MATINS RING' . . .	603
III. 'WHEN THE LAST LAIRD OF RAVENSWOOD TO RAVENSWOOD SHALL RIDE' . . .	604
SONGS FROM THE LEGEND OF MONTROSE.	
I. ANCIENT GAELIC MELODY . . .	604
II. THE ORPHAN MAID . . .	604
VERSES FROM IVANHOE.	
I. THE CRUSADER'S RETURN . . .	605
II. THE BAREFOOTED FRIAR . . .	606
III. 'NORMAN SAW ON ENGLISH OAK' . . .	606
IV. WAR SONG . . .	607
V. REBECCA'S HYMN . . .	608
VI. THE BLACK KNIGHT AND WAMBA . . .	608
VII. ANOTHER CAROL BY THE SAME . . .	609
VIII. FUNERAL HYMN . . .	610
VERSES FROM THE MONASTERY.	
I. ANSWER TO INTRODUCTORY EPISTLE . . .	609
II. BORDER SONG . . .	610
III. SONGS OF THE WHITE LADY OF AVENEL . . .	610
IV. TO THE SUB-PRIOR . . .	611
V. HALBERT'S INCANTATION . . .	612
VI. TO HALBERT . . .	612
VII. TO THE SAME . . .	613
VIII. TO THE SAME . . .	615
IX. TO MARY AVENEL . . .	615
X. TO EDWARD GLENDINNING . . .	616
XI. THE WHITE LADY'S FAREWELL . . .	616

GOLDTHRED'S SONG FROM KENIL- WORTH	616	III. THE BLOODY VEST . . .	640
VERSES FROM THE PIRATE.		VERSES FROM WOODSTOCK.	
I. THE SONG OF THE TEMPEST .	617	I. 'BY PATHLESS MARCH, BY GREENWOOD TREE'	642
II. HALCRO'S SONG	618	II. GLEE FOR KING CHARLES .	643
III. SONG OF HAROLD HAR- FAGER	619	III. 'AN HOUR WITH THEE' .	643
IV. SONG OF THE MERMAIDS AND MERMEN	619	IV. 'SON OF A WITCH' . . .	643
V. NORNA'S VERSES	620	LINES TO SIR CUTHBERT SHARP .	643
VI. HALCRO AND NORNA . . .	621	VERSES FROM CHRONICLES OF THE CANON-GATE.	
VII. THE FISHERMEN'S SONG .	623	I. OLD SONG FROM 'THE HIGHLAND WIDOW'	644
VIII. CLEVELAND'S SONGS . .	623	II. THE LAY OF POOR LOUISE, FROM 'THE FAIR MAID OF PERTH'	644
IX. HALCRO'S VERSES	624	III. DEATH CHANT	645
X. NORNA'S INCANTATION . .	625	IV. SONG OF THE GLEE- MAIDEN	645
XI. THE SAME AT THE MEET- ING WITH MINNA	625	THE DEATH OF KEELDAR . . .	645
XII. BRYCE SNAILSFOOT'S AD- VERTISEMENT	627	THE SECRET TRIBUNAL, FROM 'ANNE OF GEIERSTEIN' . . .	647
'ON ETTRICK FOREST'S MOUN- TAINS DUN'	627	THE FORAY	647
THE MAID OF ISLA	627	INSCRIPTION FOR THE MONUMENT OF THE REV. GEORGE SCOTT .	648
FAREWELL TO THE MUSE . . .	628	SONGS FROM THE DOOM OF DE- VORGAIL.	
NIGEL'S INITIATION AT WHITE- FRIARS, FROM 'THE FORTUNES OF NIGEL'	628	I. 'THE SUN UPON THE LAKE' .	648
'CARLE, NOW THE KING'S COME' .	629	II. 'WE LOVE THE SHRILL TRUMPET'	648
THE BANNATYNE CLUB	632	III. 'ADMIRE NOT THAT I GAINED'	649
COUNTY GUY	633	IV. 'WHEN THE TEMPEST' .	649
EPILOGUE TO THE DRAMA FOUNDED ON 'SAINT RONAN'S WELL' . .	633	V. BONNY DUNDEE	649
EPILOGUE	635	VI. 'WHEN FRIENDS ARE MET'	651
VERSES FROM REDGAUNTLET.		'HITHER WE COME'	651
I. A CATCH OF COWLEY'S AL- TERED	635	LINES ON FORTUNE	651
II. 'AS LORDS THEIR LABORERS' HIRE DELAY'	636		
LINES ADDRESSED TO MONSIEUR ALEXANDRE, THE CELEBRATED VENTRILOQUIST	636	APPENDIX.	
TO J. G. LOCKHART, ESQ., ON THE COMPOSITION OF MAIDA'S EPI- TAPH	636	I. JUVENILE LINES.	
SONGS FROM THE BETROTHED.		FROM VIRGIL	653
I. 'SOLDIER, WAKE!'	637	ON A THUNDER-STORM . . .	653
II. WOMAN'S FAITH	638	ON THE SETTING SUN . . .	653
III. 'I ASKED OF MY HARP' .	638	II. MOTTOES FROM THE NOVELS.	
IV. 'WIDOWED WIFE AND WEDDED MAID'	639	FROM THE ANTIQUARY . . .	653
VERSES FROM THE TALISMAN.		FROM THE BLACK DWARF .	656
I. 'DARK AHRIMAN, WHOM IRAK STILL'	639	FROM OLD MORTALITY . . .	656
II. 'WHAT BRAVE CHIEF SHALL HEAD THE FORCES'	640	FROM ROB ROY	657
		FROM THE HEART OF MID- LOTHIAN	658
		FROM THE BRIDE OF LAM- MERMOOR	658
		FROM THE LEGEND OF MON- TROSE	659

FROM IVANHOE	659	FROM WOODSTOCK	678
FROM THE MONASTERY	660	FROM CHRONICLES OF THE	
FROM THE ABBOT	663	CANONGATE	679
FROM KENILWORTH	665	FROM THE FAIR MAID OF	
FROM THE PIRATE	667	PERTH	680
FROM THE FORTUNES OF		FROM ANNE OF GEIERSTEIN	680
NIGEL	668	FROM COUNT ROBERT OF	
FROM PEVERIL OF THE PEAK	672	PARIS	682
FROM QUENTIN DURWARD .	674	FROM CASTLE DANGEROUS .	684
FROM SAINT RONAN'S WELL	675	INDEX OF FIRST LINES . .	687
FROM THE BETROTHED . .	676	INDEX OF TITLES	695
FROM THE TALISMAN . . .	677		

TWO BALLADS FROM THE GERMAN OF BÜRGER

WILLIAM AND HELEN

IMITATED FROM THE 'LENORÉ'
OF BÜRGER

FROM heavy dreams fair Helen
rose,
And eyed the dawning red :
'Alas, my love, thou tarriest long !
O art thou false or dead ?'

With gallant Frederick's princely
power
He sought the bold Crusade,
But not a word from Judah's wars
Told Helen how he sped.

With Paynim and with Saracen
At length a truce was made, 10
And every knight returned to dry
The tears his love had shed.

Our gallant host was homeward
bound
With many a song of joy ;
Green waved the laurel in each
plume,
The badge of victory.

And old and young, and sire and
son,
To meet them crowd the way,
With shouts and mirth and melody,
The debt of love to pay. 20

Full many a maid her true-love
met,
And sobbed in his embrace,
And fluttering joy in tears and
smiles
Arrayed full many a face.

Nor joy nor smile for Helen sad,
She sought the host in vain ;
For none could tell her William's
fate,
If faithless or if slain.

The martial band is past and gone ;
She rends her raven hair, 30
And in distraction's bitter mood
She weeps with wild despair.

'O, rise, my child,' her mother said,
'Nor sorrow thus in vain ;
A perjured lover's fleeting heart
No tears recall again.'

'O mother, what is gone is gone,
What's lost forever lorn :
Death, death alone can comfort
me ;
O had I ne'er been born ! 40

'O, break, my heart, O, break at
once !
Drink my life-blood, Despair !
No joy remains on earth for me,
For me in heaven no share.'

'O, enter not in judgment, Lord !'
The pious mother prays ;
'Impute not guilt to thy frail child !
She knows not what she says.

'O, say thy pater-noster, child !
O, turn to God and grace ! 50
His will, that turned thy bliss to
bale,
Can change thy bale to bliss.'

'O mother, mother, what is bliss ?
O mother, what is bale ?

My William's love was heaven on
earth,
Without it earth is hell.

'Why should I pray to ruthless
Heaven,
Since my loved William's slain?
I only prayed for William's sake,
And all my prayers were vain.' 60

'O, take the sacrament, my child,
And check these tears that flow;
By resignation's humble prayer,
O, hallowed be thy woe!'

'No sacrament can quench this fire,
Or slake this scorching pain;
No sacrament can bid the dead
Arise and live again.

'O, break, my heart, O, break at
once!
Be thou my god, Despair! 70
Heaven's heaviest blow has fallen
on me,
And vain each fruitless prayer.'

'O, enter not in judgment, Lord,
With thy frail child of clay!
She knows not what her tongue
has spoke;
Impute it not, I pray!

'Forbear, my child, this desperate
woe,
And turn to God and grace;
Well can devotion's heavenly glow
Convert thy bale to bliss.' 80

'O mother, mother, what is bliss?
O mother, what is bale?
Without my William what were
heaven,
Or with him what were hell?'

Wild she arraigns the eternal
doom,
Upbraids each sacred power,
Till, spent, she sought her silent
room,
All in the lonely tower.

She beat her breast, she wrung her
hands,
Till sun and day were o'er, 90
And through the glimmering lat-
tice shone
The twinkling of the star.

Then, crash! the heavy drawbridge
fell
That o'er the moat was hung;
And, clatter! clatter! on its boards
The hoof of courser rung.

The clank of echoing steel was
heard
As off the rider bounded;
And slowly on the winding stair
A heavy footstep sounded. 100

And hark! and hark! a knock—
tap! tap!
A rustling stifled noise;—
Door-latch and tinkling staples
ring;—
At length a whispering voice.

'Awake, awake, arise, my love!
How, Helen, dost thou fare?
Wak'st thou, or sleep'st? laugh'st
thou, or weep'st?
Hast thought on me, my fair?'

My love! my love!—so late by
night!—
I waked, I wept for thee: 110
Much have I borne since dawn of
morn;
Where, William, couldst thou
be?'

'We saddle late—from Hungary
I rode since darkness fell;
And to its bourne we both re-
turn
Before the matin-bell.'

'O, rest this night within my arms,
And warm thee in their fold!
Chill howls through hawthorn bush
the wind:—
My love is deadly cold.' 120

'Let the wind howl through haw-
thorn bush!

This night we must away;
The steed is wight, the spur is
bright;
I cannot stay till day.

'Busk, busk, and boune! Thou
mount'st behind
Upon my black barb steed:
O'er stock and stile, a hundred
miles,
We haste to bridal bed.'

'To-night — to-night a hundred
miles! —
O dearest William, stay! 130
The bell strikes twelve — dark,
dismal hour!
O, wait, my love, till day!'

'Look here, look here — the moon
shines clear —
Full fast I ween we ride;
Mount and away! for ere the day
We reach our bridal bed.

'The black barb snorts, the bridle
rings;
Haste, busk, and boune, and seat
thee!
The feast is made, the chamber
spread,
The bridal guests await thee.' 140

Strong love prevailed: she busks,
she bounes,
She mounts the barb behind,
And round her darling William's
waist
Her lily arms she twined.

And, hurry! hurry! off they rode,
As fast as fast might be;
Spurned from the courser's thun-
dering heels
The flashing pebbles flee.

And on the right and on the left,
Ere they could snatch a view, 150

Fast, fast each mountain, mead,
and plain,
And cot and castle flew.

'Sit fast — dost fear? — The moon
shines clear —
Fleet goes my barb — keep hold!
Fear'st thou?' — 'O no!' she faintly
said,
'But why so stern and cold?

'What yonder rings? what yonder
sings?
'Why shrieks the owlet gray?'
'T is death-bells' clang, 't is fu-
neral song,
The body to the clay. 160

'With song and clang at morrow's
dawn
Ye may inter the dead:
To-night I ride with my young
bride
To deck our bridal bed.

'Come with thy choir, thou cofined
guest,
To swell our nuptial song!
Come, priest, to bless our marriage
feast!
Come all, come all along!'

Ceased clang and song; down sunk
the bier;
The shrouded corpse arose: 170
And hurry! hurry! all the train
The thundering steed pursues.

And forward! forward! on they
go;
High snorts the straining steed;
Thick pants the rider's laboring
breath,
As headlong on they speed.

'O William, why this savage haste?
And where thy bridal bed?'
'T is distant far, low, damp, and
chill,
And narrow, trustless maid.' 180

'No room for me?' — 'Enough for both; —

Speed, speed, my barb, thy course!'

O'er thundering bridge, through boiling surge,

He drove the furious horse.

Tramp! tramp! along the land they rode,

Splash! splash! along the sea;
The scourge is wight, the spur is bright,

The flashing pebbles flee.

Fled past on right and left how fast
Each forest, grove, and bower!

On right and left fled past how fast

Each city, town, and tower! ¹⁹¹

'Dost fear? dost fear? The moon shines clear,

Dost fear to ride with me? —

Hurrah! hurrah! the dead can ride!' —

'O William, let them be! —

'See there, see there! What yonder swings

And creaks mid whistling rain?' —

'Gibbet and steel, the accursed wheel;

A murderer in his chain. — ²⁰⁰

'Hollo! thou felon, follow here:

To bridal bed we ride;

And thou shalt prance a fether dance

Before me and my bride.'

And, hurry! hurry! clash, clash, clash!

The wasted form descends;

And fleet as wind through hazel bush

The wild career attends.

Tramp! tramp! along the land they rode,

Splash! splash! along the sea; ²⁰⁹

The scourge is red, the spur drops blood,

The flashing pebbles flee.

How fled what moonshine faintly showed!

How fled what darkness hid!

How fled the earth beneath their feet,

The heaven above their head!

'Dost fear? dost fear? The moon shines clear,

And well the dead can ride;

Dost faithful Helen fear for them?' — ²¹⁹

'O leave in peace the dead!' —

'Barb! Barb! methinks I hear the cock;

The sand will soon be run:

Barb! Barb! I smell the morning air;

The race is well-nigh done.'

Tramp! tramp! along the land they rode,

Splash! splash! along the sea;

The scourge is red, the spur drops blood,

The flashing pebbles flee.

'Hurrah! hurrah! well ride the dead;

The bride, the bride is come; ²³⁰

And soon we reach the bridal bed,
For, Helen, here's my home.'

Reluctant on its rusty hinge

Revolved an iron door,

And by the pale moon's setting beam

Were seen a church and tower.

With many a shriek and cry whiz round

The birds of midnight scared;

And rustling like autumnal leaves,
Unhallowed ghosts were heard.

O'er many a tomb and tombstone pale

He spurred the fiery horse, ²⁴¹

Till sudden at an open grave
He checked the wondrous course.

The falling gauntlet quits the rein,
Down drops the casque of steel,
The cuirass leaves his shrinking
side,
The spur his gory heel.

The eyes desert the naked skull,
The mouldering flesh the bone,
Till Helen's lily arms entwine ²⁵¹
A ghastly skeleton.

The furious barb snorts fire and
foam,
And with a fearful bound
Dissolves at once in empty air,
And leaves her on the ground.

Half seen by fits, by fits half heard,
Pale spectres flit along,
Wheel round the maid in dismal
dance,
And howl the funeral song; ²⁶⁰

'E'en when the heart's with an-
guish cleft
Revere the doom of Heaven,
Her soul is from her body reft;
Her spirit be forgiven!'

THE WILD HUNTSMAN

IMITATED FROM BÜRGER'S
'WILDE JÄGER'

THE Wildgrave winds his bugle-
horn,
To horse, to horse! halloo, halloo!
His fiery courser snuffs the morn,
And thronging serfs their lord
pursue.

The eager pack from couples freed
Dash through the bush, the brier,
the brake;
While answering hound and horn
and steed
The mountain echoes startling
wake.

The beams of God's own hallowed
day
Had painted yonder spire with
gold, ¹⁰
And, calling sinful man to pray,
Loud, long, and deep the bell had
toll'd;

But still the Wildgrave onward
rides;
Halloo, halloo! and, hark again!
When, spurring from opposing
sides,
Two stranger horsemen join the
train.

Who was each stranger, left and
right,
Well may I guess, but dare not
tell;
The right-hand steed was silver
white, ¹⁹
The left the swarthy hue of hell.

The right-hand horseman, young
and fair,
His smile was like the morn of
May;
The left from eye of tawny glare
Shot midnight lightning's lurid
ray.

He waved his huntsman's cap on
high,
Cried, 'Welcome, welcome, noble
lord!
What sport can earth, or sea, or sky,
To match the princely chase,
afford?'

'Cease thy loud bugle's clanging
knell,'
Cried the fair youth with silver
voice; ³⁰
'And for devotion's choral swell
Exchange the rude unhallowed
noise.

To-day the ill-omened chase for-
bear,
Yon bell yet summons to the
fane;

To-day the Warning Spirit hear,
To-morrow thou mayst mourn in
vain.'

'Away, and sweep the glades
along!'

The sable hunter hoarse replies;
'To muttering monks leave matin-
song,
And bells and books and mys-
teries.'

40

The Wildgrave spurred his ardent
steed,

And, launching forward with a
bound,

'Who, for thy drowsy priestlike
rede,

Would leave the jovial horn and
hound?

'Hence, if our manly sport offend!
With pious fools go chant and
pray:—

Well hast thou spoke, my dark-
browed friend;

Halloo, halloo! and hark away!'

The Wildgrave spurred his courser
light,

O'er moss and moor, o'er holt
and hill;

50

And on the left and on the right,
Each stranger horseman fol-
lowed still.

Up springs from yonder tangled
thorn

A stag more white than moun-
tain snow;

And louder rung the Wildgrave's
horn,

'Hark forward, forward! holla,
ho!'

A heedless wretch has crossed the
way;

He gasps the thundering hoofs
below;—

But live who can, or die who may,
Still, 'Forward, forward!' on
they go.

60

See, where yon simple fences meet,
A field with autumn's blessings
crowned;

See, prostrate at the Wildgrave's
feet,

A husbandman with toil em-
browned:

'O mercy, mercy, noble lord!

Spare the poor's pittance,' was
his cry,

'Earned by the sweat these brows
have poured

In scorching hour of fierce July.'

Earnest the right-hand stranger
pleads,

The left still cheering to the
prey;

70

The impetuous Earl no warning
heeds,

But furious holds the onward
way.

'Away, thou hound so basely born,
Or dread the scourge's echoing
blow!'

Then loudly rung his bugle-horn,
'Hark forward, forward! holla,
ho!'

So said, so done:—A single bound
Clears the poor laborer's humble
pale;

Wild follows man and horse and
hound,

Like dark December's stormy
gale.

80

And man and horse, and hound
and horn,

Destructive sweep the field
along;

While, joying o'er the wasted
corn,

Fell Famine marks the madden-
ing throng.

Again uproused the timorous prey
Scours moss and moor, and holt
and hill;

Hard run, he feels his strength
decay,
And trusts for life his simple
skill.

Too dangerous solitude appeared;
He seeks the shelter of the
crowd; 90

Amid the flock's domestic herd
His harmless head he hopes to
shroud.

O'er moss and moor, and holt and
hill,

His track the steady blood-
hounds trace;

O'er moss and moor, unwearied
still,

The furious Earl pursues the
chase.

Full lowly did the herdsman
fall:

'O spare, thou noble baron, spare
These herds, a widow's little all;
These flocks, an orphan's fleecy
care!' 100

Earnest the right-hand stranger
pleads,

The left still cheering to the
prey;

The Earl nor prayer nor pity heeds,
But furious keeps the onward
way.

'Unmannered dog! To stop my
sport

Vain were thy cant and beggar
whine,

Though human spirits of thy sort
Were tenants of these carrion
kine!'

Again he winds his bugle-horn,

'Hark forward, forward, holla,
ho!' 110

And through the herd in ruthless
scorn

He cheers his furious hounds to
go.

In heaps the throttled victims fall;
Down sinks their mangled herds-
man near;

The murderous cries the stag ap-
pall,—

Again he starts, new-nerved by
fear.

With blood besmeared and white
with foam,

While big the tears of anguish
pour,

He seeks amid the forest's gloom
The humble hermit's hallowed
bower. 120

But man and horse, and horn and
hound,

Fast rattling on his traces go;
The sacred chapel rung around
With, 'Hark away! and, holla,
ho!'

All mild, amid the rout profane,
The holy hermit poured his
prayer;

'Forbear with blood God's house
to stain;

Revere His altar and forbear!

'The meanest brute has rights to
plead,

Which, wronged by cruelty or
pride, 130

Draw vengeance on the ruthless
head:—

Be warned at length and turn
aside.'

Still the fair horseman anxious
pleads;

The black, wild whooping, points
the prey:—

Alas! the Earl no warning heeds,
But frantic keeps the forward
way.

'Holy or not, or right or wrong,
Thy altar and its rites I spurn;

Not sainted martyrs' sacred song,
Not God himself shall make me
turn!' 140

He spurs his horse, he winds his
horn,
‘Hark forward, forward, holla,
ho!’
But off, on whirlwind’s pinions
borne,
The stag, the hut, the hermit, go.

And horse and man, and horn and
hound,
And clamor of the chase, was
gone;
For hoofs and howls and bugle-
sound,
A deadly silence reigned alone.

Wild gazed the affrighted Earl
around;
He strove in vain to wake his
horn, 150
In vain to call; for not a sound
Could from his anxious lips be
borne.

He listens for his trusty hounds,
No distant baying reached his
ears;
His courser, rooted to the ground,
The quickening spur unmindful
bears.

Still dark and darker frown the
shades,
Dark as the darkness of the
grave;
And not a sound the still invades,
Save what a distant torrent gave.

High o’er the sinner’s humbled
head 161
At length the solemn silence
broke;
And from a cloud of swarthy red
The awful voice of thunder
spoke.

‘Oppressor of creation fair!
Apostate Spirits’ hardened tool!
Scorner of God! Scourge of the
poor!
The measure of thy cup is full.

‘Be chased forever through the
wood,
Forever roam the affrighted
wild; 170
And let thy fate instruct the proud,
God’s meanest creature is His
child.’

‘T was hushed:— One flash of som-
bre glare
With yellow tinged the forests
brown;
Uprose the Wildgrave’s bristling
hair,
And horror chilled each nerve
and bone.

Cold poured the sweat in freezing
rill;
A rising wind began to sing,
And louder, louder, louder still,
Brought storm and tempest on
its wing. 180

Earth heard the call;— her entrails
rend;
From yawning rifts, with many a
yell,
Mixed with sulphureous flames,
ascend
The misbeggotten dogs of hell.

What ghastly huntsman next arose
Well may I guess, but dare not
tell;
His eye like midnight lightning
glows,
His steed the swarthy hue of
hell.

The Wildgrave flies o’er bush and
thorn
With many a shriek of helpless
woe; 190
Behind him hound and horse and
horn,
And, ‘Hark away, and holla, ho!’

With wild despair’s reverted eye,
Close, close behind, he marks the
throng,

With bloody fangs and eager
cry;
In frantic fear he scours along. —

Still, still shall last the dreadful
chase
Till time itself shall have an
end;
By day they scour earth's caverned
space,
At midnight's witching hour ascend.
200

This is the horn and hound and
horse

That oft the lated peasant hears;
Appalled he signs the frequent
cross,
When the wild din invades his
ears.

The wakeful priest oft drops a tear
For human pride, for human woe,
When at his midnight mass he
hears
The infernal cry of 'Holla, ho!'

EARLY BALLADS AND LYRICS

THE VIOLET

THE violet in her greenwood
bower,

Where birchen boughs with ha-
zels mingle,
May boast itself the fairest flower
In glen or copse or forest dingle.

Though fair her gems of azure hue,
Beneath the dewdrop's weight
reclining,

I've seen an eye of lovelier blue,
More sweet through watery lus-
tre shining.

The summer sun that dew shall
dry

Ere yet the day be past its mor-
row,
Nor longer in my false love's eye
Remained the tear of parting
sorrow.

TO A LADY

WITH FLOWERS FROM A ROMAN
WALL

TAKE these flowers which, purple
waving,
On the ruined rampart grew,

Where, the sons of freedom brav-
ing,
Rome's imperial standards flew.

Warriors from the breach of dan-
ger
Pluck no longer laurels there;
They but yield the passing stranger
Wild-flower wreaths for Beauty's
hair.

THE ERL-KING

FROM THE GERMAN OF GOETHE

O, WHO rides by night thro' the
woodland so wild?

It is the fond father embracing
his child;

And close the boy nestles within
his loved arm,

To hold himself fast and to keep
himself warm.

'O father, see yonder! see yonder!'
he says;

'My boy, upon what dost thou
fearfully gaze?'—

'O, 't is the Erl-King with his
crown and his shroud.'—

'No, my son, it is but a dark
wreath of the cloud.'

(*The ERL-KING speaks*)

'O, come and go with me, thou
loveliest child;
By many a gay sport shall thy
time be beguiled;
My mother keeps for thee full
many a fair toy,
And many a fine flower shall she
pluck for my boy.'

'O father, my father, and did you
not hear
The Erl-King whisper so low in
my ear?'—
'Be still, my heart's darling—my
child, be at ease;
It was but the wild blast as it
sung thro' the trees.'

ERL-KING

'O, wilt thou go with me, thou
loveliest boy?
My daughter shall tend thee with
care and with joy;
She shall bear thee so lightly thro'
wet and thro' wild,
And press thee and kiss thee and
sing to my child.'

'O, father, my father, and saw you
not plain,
The Erl-King's pale daughter glide
past through the rain?'—
'O yes, my loved treasure, I knew
it full soon;
It was the gray willow that danced
to the moon.'

ERL-KING

'O, come and go with me, no longer
delay,
Or else, silly child, I will drag thee
away.'—
'O father! O father! now, now
keep your hold,
The Erl-King has seized me—his
grasp is so cold!'

Sore trembled the father; he
spurred thro' the wild,

Clasping close to his bosom his
shuddering child;
He reaches his dwelling in doubt
and in dread,
But, clasped to his bosom, the in-
fant was *dead*!

WAR SONG OF THE ROYAL EDINBURGH LIGHT DRA- GOONS

To horse! to horse! the standard
flies,
The bugles sound the call;
The Gallic navy stems the seas,
The voice of battle's on the breeze,
Arouse ye, one and all!

From high Dunedin's towers we
come,
A band of brothers true;
Our casques the leopard's spoils
surround,
With Scotland's hardy thistle
crown'd;
We boast the red and blue.

Though tamely crouch to Gallia's
frown
Dull Holland's tardy train;
Their ravished toys though Ro-
mans mourn;
Though gallant Switzers vainly
spurn,
And, foaming, gnaw the chain;

Oh! had they marked the avenging
call

Their brethren's murder gave,
Disunion ne'er their ranks had
mown,
Nor patriot valor, desperate grown
Sought freedom in the grave!

Shall we, too, bend the stubborn
head,
In Freedom's temple born,
Dress our pale cheek in timid
smile,

To hail a master in our isle,
Or brook a victor's scorn?

No! though destruction o'er the
land

Come pouring as a flood,
The sun, that sees our falling
day,
Shall mark our sabres' deadly
sway,
And set that night in blood.

For gold let Gallia's legions fight,
Or plunder's bloody gain;
Unbribed, unbought, our swords
we draw,
To guard our king, to fence our
law,
Nor shall their edge be vain.

If ever breath of British gale
Shall fan the tri-color,
Or footstep of invader rude,
With rapine foul, and red with
blood,
Pollute our happy shore, —

Then farewell home! and farewell
friends!
Adieu each tender tie!
Resolved, we mingle in the tide,
Where charging squadrons furi-
ous ride,
To conquer or to die.

To horse! to horse! the sabres
gleam;
High sounds our bugle call;
Combined by honor's sacred tie,
Our word is *Laws and Liberty!*
March forward, one and all!

SONG

FROM 'GOETZ VON BERLICHIN-
GEN'

It was a little naughty page,
Ha! ha!
Would catch a bird that closed in
cage.

Sa! sa!

Ha! ha!

Sa! sa!

He seized the cage, the latch did
draw,

Ha! ha!

And in he thrust his knavish
paw.

Sa! sa!

Ha! ha!

Sa! sa!

The bird dashed out, and gained
the thorn,

Ha! ha!

And laughed the silly fool to scorn!

Sa! sa!

Ha! ha!

Sa! sa!

SONGS

FROM 'THE HOUSE OF ASPEN'

I

Joy to the victors, the sons of old
Aspen!

Joy to the race of the battle and
scar!

Glory's proud garland triumph-
antly grasping,

Generous in peace, and victorious
in war.

Honor acquiring,

Valor inspiring,

Bursting, resistless, through foe-
men they go;

War-axes wielding,

Broken ranks yielding,

Till from the battle proud Rod-
eric retiring,

Yields in wild rout the fair palm to
his foe.

Joy to each warrior, true follower
of Aspen!

Joy to the heroes that gained the
bold day!

Health to our wounded, in agony
gasping;

Peace to our brethren that fell
in the fray !
Boldly this morning,
Roderic's power scorning,
Well for their chieftain their
blades did they wield ;
Joy blest them dying,
As Maltingen flying,
Low laid his banners, our con-
quest adorning,
Their death-clouded eye-balls de-
scribed on the field !

Now to our home, the proud man-
sion of Aspen,
Bend we, gay victors, triumphant
away.
There each fond damsel, her gal-
lant youth clasping,
Shall wipe from his forehead the
stains of the fray.
Listening the prancing
Of horses advancing ;
E'en now on the turrets our
maidens appear.
Love our hearts warming,
Songs the night charming,
Round goes the grape in the gob-
let gay dancing ;
Love, wine, and song, our blithe
evening shall cheer !

II

Sweet shone the sun on the fair
lake of Toro,
Weak were the whispers that
waved the dark wood,
As a fair maiden, bewildered in
sorrow,
Sighed to the breezes and wept
to the flood.—
'Saints, from the mansion of bliss
lowly bending,
Virgin, that hear'st the poor
suppliant's cry,
Grant my petition, in anguish as-
cending,
My Frederick restore, or let
Eleanor die.'

Distant and faint were the sounds
of the battle ;
With the breezes they rise, with
the breezes they fail,
Till the shout, and the groan, and
the conflict's dread rattle,
And the chase's wild clamor
came loading the gale.
Breathless she gazed through the
woodland so dreary,
Slowly approaching, a warrior
was seen ;
Life's ebbing tide marked his foot-
steps so weary,
Cleft was his helmet, and woe
was his mien.

'Save thee, fair maid, for our
armies are flying ;
Save thee, fair maid, for thy
guardian is low ;
Cold on yon heath thy bold Fred-
erick is lying,
Fast through the woodland ap-
proaches the foe.'

III

[RHEIN-WEIN LIED]

What makes the troopers' frozen
courage muster ?
The grapes of juice divine.
Upon the Rhine, upon the Rhine
they cluster :
Oh, blessed be the Rhine !

Let fringe and furs, and many a
rabbit skin, sirs,
Bedeck your Saracen ;
He'll freeze without what warms
our heart within, sirs,
When the night-frost crusts
the fen.

But on the Rhine, but on the Rhine
they cluster,
The grapes of juice divine,
That make our troopers' frozen
courage muster :
Oh, blessed be the Rhine !

GLENFINLAS

OR, LORD RONALD'S CORONACH

For them the viewless forms of air obey,
 Their bidding heed, and at their beck
 repair;
 They know what spirit brews the storm-
 ful day,
 And heartless oft, like moody madness
 stare,
 To see the phantom-train their secret
 work prepare.

COLLINS.

'O HONE a rie'! O hone a rie'!
 The pride of Albin's line is o'er,
 And fallen Glenartney's stateliest
 tree;
 We ne'er shall see Lord Ronald
 more!

O, sprung from great Macgillia-
 nore,
 The chief that never feared a
 foe,
 How matchless was thy broad
 claymore,
 How deadly thine unerring bow!

Well can the Saxon widows tell
 How on the Teith's resounding
 shore¹⁰
 The boldest Lowland warriors
 fell,
 As down from Lenny's pass you
 bore.

But o'er his hills in festal day
 How blazed Lord Ronald's
 beltane-tree,
 While youths and maids the light
 strathspey
 So nimbly danced with Highland
 glee!

Cheered by the strength of Ronald's
 shell,
 E'en age forgot his tresses hoar;
 But now the loud lament we swell,
 O, ne'er to see Lord Ronald
 more!

20

From distant isles a chieftain came
 The joys of Ronald's halls to
 find,
 And chase with him the dark-brown
 game
 That bounds o'er Albin's hills of
 wind.

'T was Moy; whom in Columba's
 isle
 The seer's prophetic spirit found,
 As, with a minstrel's fire the while,
 He waked his harp's harmonious
 sound.

Full many a spell to him was
 known
 Which wandering spirits shrink
 to hear;
 And many a lay of potent tone³⁰
 Was never meant for mortal ear.

For there, 't is said, in mystic mood
 High converse with the dead
 they hold,
 And oft espy the fated shroud
 That shall the future corpse en-
 fold.

O, so it fell that on a day,
 To rouse the red deer from their
 den,
 The chiefs have ta'en their distant
 way,
 And scoured the deep Glenfinlas
 glen.⁴⁰

No vassals wait their sports to aid,
 To watch their safety, deck their
 board;
 Their simple dress the Highland
 plaid,
 Their trusty guard the Highland
 sword.

Three summer days through brake
 and dell
 Their whistling shafts success-
 ful flew;
 And still when dewy evening fell
 The quarry to their hut they
 drew.

In gray Glenfinlas' deepest nook
 The solitary cabin stood, 50
 Fast by Moneira's sullen brook,
 Which murmurs through that
 lonely wood.

Soft fell the night, the sky was
 calm,
 When three successive days had
 flown :

And summer mist in dewy balm
 Steeped heathy bank and mossy
 stone.

The moon, half-hid in silvery
 flakes,
 Afar her dubious radiance shed,
 Quivering on Katrine's distant
 lakes, 59
 And resting on Benledi's head.

Now in their hut in social guise
 Their sylvan fare the chiefs en-
 joy ;

And pleasure laughs in Ronald's
 eyes,
 As many a pledge he quaffs to
 Moy.

'What lack we here to crown our
 bliss,
 While thus the pulse of joy beats
 high ?

What but fair woman's yielding
 kiss,
 Her panting breath and melting
 eye ?

'To chase the deer of yonder
 shades,
 This morning left their father's
 pile 70
 The fairest of our mountain maids,
 The daughters of the proud
 Glengyle.

'Long have I sought sweet Mary's
 heart,
 And dropped the tear and heaved
 the sigh :

But vain the lover's wily art
 Beneath a sister's watchful eye.

'But thou mayst teach that guard-
 ian fair,
 While far with Mary I am flown,
 Of other hearts to cease her care,
 And find it hard to guard her
 own. 80

'Touch but thy harp, thou soon
 shalt see
 The lovely Flora of Glengyle,
 Unmindful of her charge and me,
 Hang on thy notes 'twixt tear
 and smile.

'Or, if she choose a melting tale,
 All underneath the greenwood
 bough,
 Will good Saint Oran's rule prevail,
 Stern huntsman of the rigid
 brow ?'

'Since Enrick's fight, since Morna's
 death,
 No more on me shall rapture
 rise, 90
 Responsive to the panting breath,
 Or yielding kiss or melting eyes.

'E'en then, when o'er the heath of
 woe
 Where sunk my hopes of love
 and fame,
 I bade my harp's wild wailings
 flow,
 On me the Seer's sad spirit came.

'The last dread curse of angry
 heaven,
 With ghastly sights and sounds
 of woe
 To dash each glimpse of joy was
 given — 99
 The gift the future ill to know.

'The bark thou saw'st, yon sum-
 mer morn,
 So gayly part from Oban's bay,

My eye beheld her dashed and
torn
Far on the rocky Colonsay.

'Thy Fergus too — thy sister's
son,
Thou saw'st with pride the gal-
lant's power,
As marching 'gainst the Lord of
Downe
He left the skirts of huge Ben-
more.

'Thou only saw'st their tartans
wave
As down Benvoirlich's side they
wound, 110
Heard'st but the pibroch answer-
ing brave
To many a target clanking round.

'I heard the groans, I marked the
tears,
I saw the wound his bosom
bore,
When on the serried Saxon spears
He poured his clan's resistless
roar.

'And thou, who bidst me think of
bliss,
And bidst my heart awake to
glee,
And court like thee the wanton
kiss —
That heart, O Ronald, bleeds for
thee! 120

'I see the death-damps chill thy
brow;
I hear thy Warning Spirit cry;
The corpse-lights dance — they're
gone, and now —
No more is given to gifted eye!'

'Alone enjoy thy dreary dreams,
Sad prophet of the evil hour!
Say, should we scorn joy's tran-
sient beams
Because to-morrow's storm may
lour?

'Or false or sooth thy words of
woe,
Clangillian's Chieftain ne'er shall
fear; 130
His blood shall bound at rapture's
glow,
Though doomed to stain the
Saxon spear.

'E'en now, to meet me in yon dell,
My Mary's buskins brush the
dew.'
He spoke, nor bade the chief fare-
well,
But called his dogs and gay
withdrew.

Within an hour returned each
hound,
In rushed the rousers of the
deer;
They howled in melancholy sound,
Then closely couched beside the
Seer. 140

No Ronald yet, though midnight
came,
And sad were Moy's prophetic
dreams,
As, bending o'er the dying flame,
He fed the watch-fire's quiver-
ing gleams.

Sudden the hounds erect their ears,
And sudden cease their moaning
howl,
Close pressed to Moy, they mark
their fears
By shivering limbs and stifled
growl. 148

Untouched the harp began to ring
As softly, slowly, oped the door;
And shook responsive every string
As light a footstep pressed the
floor.

And by the watch-fire's glimmering
light
Close by the minstrel's side was
seen

An huntress maid, in beauty bright,
All dropping wet her robes of
green.

All dropping wet her garments
seem;

Chilled was her cheek, her
bosom bare,
As, bending o'er the dying gleam,
She wrung the moisture from her
hair. 160

With maiden blush she softly said,
'O gentle huntsman, hast thou
seen,

In deep Glenfinlas' moonlight
glade,
A lovely maid in vest of green:

'With her a chief in Highland
pride;

His shoulders bear the hunter's
bow,
The mountain dirk adorns his
side,

Far on the wind his tartans
flow?'—

'And who art thou? and who are
they?' 169

All ghastly gazing, Moy replied:
'And why, beneath the moon's
pale ray,
Dare ye thus roam Glenfinlas'
side?'

'Where wild Loch Katrine pours
her tide,

Blue, dark, and deep, round
many an isle,
Our father's towers o'erhang her
side,

The castle of the bold Glen-
gyle.

'To chase the dun Glenfinlas deer
Our woodland course this morn
we bore,

And haply met while wandering
here 179

The son of great Macgillianore.

'O, aid me then to seek the pair,
Whom, loitering in the woods, I
lost;

Alone I dare not venture there,
Where walks, they say, the
shrieking ghost.'

'Yes, many a shrieking ghost walks
there;

Then first, my own sad vow to
keep,

Here will I pour my midnight
prayer,

Which still must rise when mor-
tals sleep.'

'O, first, for pity's gentle sake,
Guide a lone wanderer on her
way! 190

For I must cross the haunted
brake,

And reach my father's towers
ere day.'

'First, three times tell each Ave-
bead,

And thrice a Pater-noster say;
Then kiss with me the holy rede;
So shall we safely wend our
way.'

'O, shame to knighthood, strange
and foul!

Go, doff the bonnet from thy
brow,

And shroud thee in the monkish
cowl, 199

Which best befits thy sullen vow.

'Not so, by high Dunlathmon's fire,
Thy heart was froze to love and
joy,

When gayly rung thy raptured lyre
To wanton Morna's melting eye.'

Wild stared the minstrel's eyes of
flame

And high his sable locks arose,
And quick his color went and came
As fear and rage alternate
rose.

'And thou! when by the blazing
oak 209

I lay, to her and love resigned,
Say, rode ye on the eddying smoke,
Or sailed ye on the midnight
wind?

'Not thine a race of mortal blood,
Nor old Glengyle's pretended
line;

Thy dame, the Lady of the Flood —
Thy sire, the Monarch of the
Mine.'

He muttered thrice Saint Oran's
rhyme,

And thrice Saint Fillan's power-
ful prayer;

Then turned him to the eastern
clime,

And sternly shook his coal-black
hair. 220

And, bending o'er his harp, he
flung

His wildest witch-notes on the
wind:

And loud and high and strange
they rung,

As many a magic change they
find.

Tall waxed the Spirit's altering
form,

Till to the roof her stature grew;
Then, mingling with the rising
storm,

With one wild yell away she flew.

Rain beats, hail rattles, whirlwinds
tear:

The slender hut in fragments
flew; 230

But not a lock of Moy's loose hair
Was waved by wind or wet by
dew.

Wild mingling with the howling
gale,

Loud bursts of ghastly laughter
rise;

High o'er the minstrel's head they
sail

And die amid the northern skies.

The voice of thunder shook the
wood,

As ceased the more than mortal
yell;

And spattering foul a shower of
blood 239

Upon the hissing firebrands fell.

Next dropped from high a mangled
arm;

The fingers strained an half-
drawn blade:

And last, the life-blood streaming
warm,

Torn from the trunk, a gasping
head.

Oft o'er that head in battling
field

Streamed the proud crest of high
Benmore;

That arm the broad claymore could
wield

Which dyed the Teith with Saxon
gore.

Woe to Moneira's sullen rills! 249
Woe to Glenfinlas' dreary glen!

There never son of Albin's hills
Shall draw the hunter's shaft
agen!

E'en the tired pilgrim's burning
feet

At noon shall shun that shelter-
ing den,

Lest, journeying in their rage, he
meet

The wayward Ladies of the Glen.

And we — behind the chieftain's
shield

No more shall we in safety dwell;
None leads the people to the
field —

And we the loud lament must
swell. 260

O hone a rie'! O hone a rie'!
 The pride of Albin's line is o'er!
 And fallen Glenartney's stateliest
 tree;
 We ne'er shall see Lord Ronald
 more!

THE EVE OF SAINT JOHN

THE Baron of Smaylho'me rose
 with day,
 He spurred his courser on,
 Without stop or stay, down the
 rocky way,
 That leads to Brotherstone.

He went not with the bold Buc-
 cleuch
 His banner broad to rear;
 He went not 'gainst the English
 yew
 To lift the Scottish spear.

Yet his plate-jack was braced and
 his helmet was laced,
 And his vaunt-brace of proof he
 wore;
 At his saddle-gerthe was a good
 steel sperthe,
 Full ten pound weight and more.

The baron returned in three days'
 space,
 And his looks were sad and sour;
 And weary was his courser's pace
 As he reached his rocky tower.

He came not from where Ancram
 Moor
 Ran red with English blood;
 Where the Douglas true and the
 bold Buccleuch
 'Gainst keen Lord Evers stood.

Yet was his helmet hacked and
 hewed,
 His acton pierced and tore,
 His axe and his dagger with blood
 imbrued, —
 But it was not English gore.

He lighted at the Chapellage,
 He held him close and still;
 And he whistled thrice for his little
 foot-page,
 His name was English Will.

'Come thou hither, my little foot-
 page,
 Come hither to my knee;
 Though thou art young and tender
 of age,
 I think thou art true to me.

'Come, tell me all that thou hast
 seen,
 And look thou tell me true!
 Since I from Smaylho'me tower
 have been,
 What did thy lady do?'

'My lady, each night, sought the
 lonely light
 That burns on the wild Watch-
 fold;
 For from height to height the bea-
 cons bright
 Of the English foemen told.

'The bittern clamored from the
 moss,
 The wind blew loud and shrill;
 Yet the craggy pathway she did
 cross
 To the eiry Beacon Hill.

'I watched her steps, and silent
 came
 Where she sat her on a stone; —
 No watchman stood by the dreary
 flame,
 It burned all alone.

'The second night I kept her in
 sight
 Till to the fire she came,
 And, by Mary's might! an armed
 knight
 Stood by the lonely flame.

'And many a word that warlike
 lord
 Did speak to my lady there;

But the rain fell fast and loud blew
the blast,
And I heard not what they were.

'The third night there the sky was
fair,
And the mountain-blast was still,
As again I watched the secret pair
On the lonesome Beacon Hill. 60

'And I heard her name the mid-
night hour,
And name this holy eve;
And say, "Come this night to thy
lady's bower;
Ask no bold baron's leave.

"He lifts his spear with the bold
Buccleuch;
His lady is all alone;
The door she 'll undo to her knight
so true
On the eve of good Saint John."

"I cannot come; I must not come;
I dare not come to thee; 70
On the eve of Saint John I must
wander alone:
In thy bower I may not be."

"Now, out on thee, faint-hearted
knight!
Thou shouldst not say me nay;
For the eve is sweet, and when
lovers meet
Is worth the whole summer's
day.

"And I 'll chain the blood-hound,
and the warder shall not
sound,
And rushes shall be strewed on
the stair;
So, by the black rood-stone and by
holy Saint John,
I conjure thee, my love, to be
there!" 80

"Though the blood-hound be
mute and the rush beneath
my foot,
And the warder his bugle should
not blow,

Yet there sleepeth a priest in the
chamber to the east,
And my footstep he would
know."

"O, fear not the priest who sleep-
eth to the east,
For to Dryburgh the way he has
ta'en;
And there to say mass, till three
days do pass,
For the soul of a knight that is
slayne."

'He turned him around and grimly
he frowned;
Then he laughed right scorn-
fully — 90
"He who says the mass-rite for
the soul of that knight
May as well say mass for me:

"At the lone midnight hour when
bad spirits have power
In thy chamber will I be." —
With that he was gone and my
lady left alone,
And no more did I see.'

Then changed, I trow, was that
bold baron's brow
From the dark to the blood-red
high;
'Now, tell me the mien of the
knight thou hast seen,
For, by Mary, he shall die!' 100

'His arms shone full bright in the
beacon's red light;
His plume it was scarlet and
blue;
On his shield was a hound in a
silver leash bound,
And his crest was a branch of
the yew.'

'Thou liest, thou liest, thou little
foot-page,
Loud dost thou lie to me!
For that knight is cold and low
laid in the mould,
All under the Eildon-tree.'

'Yet hear but my word, my noble
lord!

For I heard her name his
name; 110

And that lady bright, she called
the knight

Sir Richard of Coldinghame.'

The bold baron's brow then
changed, I trow,

From high blood-red to pale —

'The grave is deep and dark —
and the corpse is stiff and
stark —

So I may not trust thy tale.

'Where fair Tweed flows round
holy Melrose,

And Eildon slopes to the plain,

Full three nights ago by some se-
cret foe

That gay gallant was slain. 120

'The varying light deceived thy
sight,

And the wild winds drowned the
name;

For the Dryburgh bells ring and
the white monks do sing

For Sir Richard of Colding-
hame!'

He passed the court-gate and he
oped the tower-gate,

And he mounted the narrow
stair

To the bartizan-seat where, with
maids that on her wait,

He found his lady fair.

That lady sat in mournful mood;
Looked over hill and vale; 130

Over Tweed's fair flood and Mer-
toun's wood,

And all down Teviotdale.

'Now hail, now hail, thou lady
bright!'

'Now hail, thou baron true!

What news, what news, from An-
cram fight?

What news from the bold Buc-
cleuch?'

'The Ancram moor is red with
gore,

For many a Southern fell;

And Buccleuch has charged us
evermore

To watch our beacons well.' 140

The lady blushed red, but nothing
she said:

Nor added the baron a word:

Then she stepped down the stair
to her chamber fair,

And so did her moody lord.

In sleep the lady mourned, and the
baron tossed and turned,

And oft to himself he said, —

'The worms around him creep, and
his bloody grave is deep —

It cannot give up the dead!'

It was near the ringing of matin-
bell,

The night was well-nigh done, 150

When a heavy sleep on that baron
fell,

On the eve of good Saint John.

The lady looked through the
chamber fair

By the light of a dying flame;

And she was aware of a knight
stood there —

Sir Richard of Coldinghame!

'Alas! away, away!' she cried,

'For the holy Virgin's sake!'

'Lady, I know who sleeps by thy
side;

But, lady, he will not awake. 160

'By Eildon-tree for long nights
three

In bloody grave have I lain;

The mass and the death-prayer
are said for me,
But, lady, they are said in vain.

'By the baron's brand, near
Tweed's fair strand,
Most foully slain I fell;
And my restless sprite on the bea-
con's height
For a space is doomed to dwell.

'At our trysting-place, for a cer-
tain space,
I must wander to and fro; 170
But I had not had power to come
to thy bower
Hadst thou not conjured me so.'

Love mastered fear — her brow
she crossed;

'How, Richard, hast thou sped?
And art thou saved or art thou
lost?'

The vision shook his head!

'Who spilleth life shall forfeit life;
So bid thy lord believe:
That lawless love is guilt above,
This awful sign receive.' 180

He laid his left palm on an oaken
beam,

His right upon her hand;
The lady shrunk and fainting sunk,
For it scorched like a fiery brand.

The sable score of fingers four
Remains on that board im-
pressed;

And forevermore that lady wore
A covering on her wrist.

There is a nun in Dryburgh bower
Ne'er looks upon the sun; 190
There is a monk in Melrose tower
He speaketh word to none.

That nun who ne'er beholds the
day,

That monk who speaks to
none —

That nun was Smaylho'me's lady
gay,
That monk the bold baron.

THE GRAY BROTHER

THE Pope he was saying the high,
high mass

All on Saint Peter's day,
With the power to him given by
the saints in heaven
To wash men's sins away.

The Pope he was saying the
blessed mass,

And the people kneeled around,
And from each man's soul his sins
did pass,
As he kissed the holy ground.

And all among the crowded throng
Was still, both limb and
tongue, 10

While through vaulted roof and
aisles aloof

The holy accents rung.

At the holiest word he quivered
for fear,

And faltered in the sound —
And when he would the chalice
rear

He dropped it to the ground.

'The breath of one of evil deed
Pollutes our sacred day;
He has no portion in our creed,
No part in what I say.' 20

'A being whom no blessed word
To ghostly peace can bring,
A wretch at whose approach ab-
horred
Recoils each holy thing.

'Up, up, unhappy! haste, arise!
My adjuration fear!
I charge thee not to stop my
voice,
Nor longer tarry here!'

Amid them all a pilgrim kneeled
 In gown of sackcloth gray; 30
 Far journeying from his native
 field,

He first saw Rome that day.

For forty days and nights so drear
 I ween he had not spoke,
 And, save with bread and water
 clear,

His fast he ne'er had broke.

Amid the penitential flock,
 Seemed none more bent to pray;
 But when the Holy Father spoke
 He rose and went his way. 40

Again unto his native land
 His weary course he drew,
 To Lothian's fair and fertile
 strand,

And Pentland's mountains blue.

His unblest feet his native seat
 Mid Eske's fair woods regain;
 Through woods more fair no
 stream more sweet
 Rolls to the eastern main.

And lords to meet the pilgrim
 came,

And vassals bent the knee; 50
 For all mid Scotland's chiefs of
 fame

Was none more famed than he.

And boldly for his country still
 In battle he had stood,
 Ay, even when on the banks of Till
 Her noblest poured their blood.

Sweet are the paths, O passing
 sweet!

By Eske's fair streams that run,
 O'er airy steep through copsewood
 deep,

Impervious to the sun. 60

There the rapt poet's step may
 rove,
 And yield the muse the day;

There Beauty, led by timid Love,
 May shun the telltale ray;

From that fair dome where suit is
 paid

By blast of bugle free,
 To Auchendinny's hazel glade
 And haunted Woodhouselee.

Who knows not Melville's beechy
 grove

And Roslin's rocky glen, 70
 Dalkeith, which all the virtues

love,
 And classic Hawthornden?

Yet never a path from day to day
 The pilgrim's footsteps range,
 Save but the solitary way
 To Burndale's ruined grange.

A woful place was that, I ween,
 As sorrow could desire;
 For nodding to the fall was each
 crumbling wall,
 And the roof was scathed with
 fire. 80

It fell upon a summer's eve,
 While on Carnethy's head
 The last faint gleams of the sun's
 low beams
 Had streaked the gray with red,

And the convent bell did vespers
 tell

Newbattle's oaks among,
 And mingled with the solemn knell
 Our Ladye's evening song;

The heavy knell, the choir's faint
 swell,

Came slowly down the wind, 90
 And on the pilgrim's ear they fell,
 As his wonted path he did find.

Deep sunk in thought, I ween, he
 was,

Nor ever raised his eye,
 Until he came to that dreary place
 Which did all in ruins lie.

He gazed on the walls, so scathed
with fire,

With many a bitter groan —
And there was aware of a Gray
Friar

Resting him on a stone. 100

'Now, Christ thee save!' said the
Gray Brother;

'Some pilgrim thou seemest to
be.'

But in sore amaze did Lord Al-
bert gaze,

Nor answer again made he.

'O, come ye from east or come ye
from west,

Or bring reliques from over the
sea;

Or come ye from the shrine of
Saint James the divine,

Or Saint John of Beverley?'

'I come not from the shrine of
Saint James the divine,

Nor bring reliques from over
the sea: 110

I bring but a curse from our father,
the Pope,

Which forever will cling to me.'

'Now, woful pilgrim, say not so!

But kneel thee down to me,

And shrive thee so clean of thy
deadly sin

That absolved thou mayst be.'

'And who art thou, thou Gray
Brother,

That I should shrive to thee,

When He to whom are given the
keys of earth and heaven

Has no power to pardon me?' 120

'O, I am sent from a distant clime,
Five thousand miles away,

And all to absolve a foul, foul
crime,

Done *here* 'twixt night and day.'

The pilgrim kneeled him on the
sand,

And thus began his saye —

When on his neck an ice-cold
hand

Did that Gray Brother laye.

.

THE FIRE-KING

The blessings of the evil Genii, which
are curses, were upon him. — *Eastern
Tale.*

BOLD knights and fair dames, to
my harp give an ear,

Of love and of war and of wonder
to hear;

And you haply may sigh in the
midst of your glee

At the tale of Count Albert and
fair Rosalie.

O, see you that castle, so strong
and so high?

And see you that lady, the tear in
her eye?

And see you that palmer from Pal-
estine's land,

The shell on his hat and the staff
in his hand? —

'Now, palmer, gray palmer, O, tell
unto me,

What news bring you home from
the Holy Countrie? 10

And how goes the warfare by Gal-
ilee's strand?

And how fare our nobles, the
flower of the land?'

'O, well goes the warfare by Gali-
lee's wave,

For Gilead and Nablous and Ra-
mah we have;

And well fare our nobles by Mount
Lebanon,

For the heathen have lost and the
Christians have won.'

A fair chain of gold mid her ring-
lets there hung;
O'er the palmer's gray locks the
fair chain has she flung:
'O palmer, gray palmer, this chain
be thy fee
For the news thou hast brought
from the Holy Countrie. 20

And, palmer, good palmer, by Gal-
ilee's wave,
O, saw ye Count Albert, the gentle
and brave?
When the Crescent went back and
the Red-cross rushed on,
O, saw ye him foremost on Mount
Lebanon?'

'O lady, fair lady, the tree green it
grows;
O lady, fair lady, the stream pure
it flows;
Your castle stands strong and
your hopes soar on high:
But, lady, fair lady, all blossoms
to die.

'The green boughs they wither,
the thunderbolt falls,
It leaves of your castle but levin-
scorched walls; 30
The pure stream runs muddy; the
gay hope is gone;
Count Albert is prisoner on Mount
Lebanon.'

O, she's ta'en a horse should be
fleet at her speed;
And she's ta'en a sword should be
sharp at her need;
And she has ta'en shipping for
Palestine's land,
To ransom Count Albert from
Soldanrie's hand.

Small thought had Count Albert
on fair Rosalie,
Small thought on his faith or his
knighthood had he:

A heathenish damsel his light
heart had won,
The Soldan's fair daughter of
Mount Lebanon. 40

'O Christian, brave Christian, my
love wouldst thou be,
Three things must thou do ere I
hearken to thee:
Our laws and our worship on thee
shalt thou take;
And this thou shalt first do for
Zulema's sake.

'And next, in the cavern where
burns evermore
The mystical flame which the Curd-
mans adore,
Alone and in silence three nights
shalt thou wake;
And this thou shalt next do for
Zulema's sake.

'And last, thou shalt aid us with
counsel and hand,
To drive the Frank robber from
Palestine's land; 50
For my lord and my love then
Count Albert I'll take,
When all this is accomplished for
Zulema's sake.'

He has thrown by his helmet and
cross-handled sword,
Renouncing his knighthood, deny-
ing his Lord;
He has ta'en the green caftan, and
turban put on,
For the love of the maiden of fair
Lebanon.

And in the dread cavern, deep deep
under ground,
Which fifty steel gates and steel
portals surround,
He has watched until daybreak,
but sight saw he none,
Save the flame burning bright on
its altar of stone. 60

Amazed was the Princess, the
Soldan amazed,
Sore murmured the priests as on
Albert they gazed;
They searched all his garments,
and under his weeds
They found and took from him his
rosary beads.

Again in the cavern, deep deep
under ground,
He watched the lone night, while
the winds whistled round;
Far off was their murmur, it came
not more nigh,
The flame burned unmoved and
naught else did he spy.

Loud murmured the priests and
amazed was the king,
While many dark spells of their
witchcraft they sing; 70
They searched Albert's body, and,
lo! on his breast
Was the sign of the Cross by his
father impressed.

The priests they erase it with care
and with pain,
And the recreant returned to the
cavern again;
But as he descended a whisper
there fell:
It was his good angel, who bade
him farewell!

High bristled his hair, his heart
fluttered and beat,
And he turned him five steps, half
resolved to retreat;
But his heart it was hardened, his
purpose was gone,
When he thought of the maiden of
fair Lebanon. 80

Scarce passed he the archway, the
threshold scarce trode,
When the winds from the four
points of heaven were abroad,

They made each steel portal to
rattle and ring,
And borne on the blast came the
dread Fire-King.

Full sore rocked the cavern when-
e'er he drew nigh,
The fire on the altar blazed bicker-
ing and high;
In volcanic explosions the moun-
tains proclaim
The dreadful approach of the
Monarch of Flame.

Unmeasured in height, undistin-
guished in form,
His breath it was lightning, his
voice it was storm; 90
I ween the stout heart of Count
Albert was tame,
When he saw in his terrors the
Monarch of Flame.

In his hand a broad falchion blue-
glimmered through smoke,
And Mount Lebanon shook as the
monarch he spoke:
'With this brand shalt thou con-
quer, thus long and no more,
Till thou bend to the Cross and the
Virgin adore.'

The cloud-shrouded arm gives the
weapon; and see!
The recreant receives the charmed
gift on his knee:
The thunders growl distant and
faint gleam the fires,
As, borne on the whirlwind, the
phantom retires. 100

Count Albert has armed him the
Paynim among,
Though his heart it was false, yet
his arm it was strong;
And the Red-cross waxed faint and
the Crescent came on,
From the day he commanded on
Mount Lebanon.

From Lebanon's forests to Galilee's
 wave,
 The sands of Samaar drank the
 blood of the brave;
 Till the Knights of the Temple and
 Knights of Saint John,
 With Salem's King Baldwin,
 against him came on.

The war-cymbals clattered, the
 trumpets replied,
 The lances were couched, and they
 closed on each side; 110
 And horseman and horses Count
 Albert o'erthrew,
 Till he pierced the thick tumult
 King Baldwin unto.

Against the charmed blade which
 Count Albert did wield,
 The fence had been vain of the
 king's Red-cross shield;
 But a page thrust him forward the
 monarch before,
 And cleft the proud turban the
 renegade wore.

So fell was the dint that Count
 Albert stooped low
 Before the crossed shield to his
 steel saddlebow;
 And scarce had he bent to the
 Red-cross his head, —
 '*Bonne Grace, Notre Dame!*' he
 unwittingly said. 120

Sore sighed the charmed sword,
 for its virtue was o'er,
 It sprung from his grasp and was
 never seen more;
 But true men have said that the
 lightning's red wing
 Did waft back the brand to the
 dread Fire-King.

He clenched his set teeth and his
 gauntleted hand;
 He stretched with one buffet that
 page on the strand;

As back from the stripling the
 broken casque rolled,
 You might see the blue eyes and
 the ringlets of gold.

Short time had Count Albert in
 horror to stare
 On those death-swimming eyeballs
 and blood-clotted hair; 130
 For down came the Templars, like
 Cedron in flood,
 And dyed their long lances in
 Saracen blood.

The Saracens, Curdmans, and
 Ishmaelites yield
 To the scallop, the saltier, and
 crossleted shield;
 And the eagles were gorged with
 the infidel dead
 From Bethsaida's fountains to
 Naphthali's head.

The battle is over on Bethsaida's
 plain. —
 O, who is yon Paynim lies stretched
 mid the slain?
 And who is yon page lying cold at
 his knee? —
 O, who but Count Albert and fair
 Rosalie? 140

The lady was buried in Salem's
 blest bound,
 The count he was left to the vul-
 ture and hound:
 Her soul to high mercy Our Lady
 did bring;
 His went on the blast to the dread
 Fire-King.

Yet many a minstrel in harping
 can tell
 How the Red-cross it conquered,
 the Crescent it fell:
 And lords and gay ladies have
 sighed mid their glee
 At the tale of Count Albert and
 fair Rosalie.

BOTHWELL CASTLE

WHEN fruitful Clydesdale's apple-
bowers

Are mellowing in the noon;
When sighs round Pembroke's
ruined towers
The sultry breath of June;

When Clyde, despite his sheltering
wood,

Must leave his channel dry,
And vainly o'er the limpid flood
The angler guides his fly;

If chance by Bothwell's lovely
braes

A wanderer thou hast been,
Or hid thee from the summer's
blaze

In Blantyre's bowers of green,

Full where the copsewood opens
wild

Thy pilgrim step hath staid,
Where Bothwell's towers in ruin
piled

O'erlook the verdant glade;

And many a tale of love and fear
Hath mingled with the scene —
Of Bothwell's banks that bloomed
so dear

And Bothwell's bonny Jean.

O, if with rugged minstrel lays
Unsated be thy ear,
And thou of deeds of other days
Another tale wilt hear, —

Then all beneath the spreading
beech,

Flung careless on the lea,
The Gothic muse the tale shall
teach

Of Bothwell's sisters three.

Wight Wallace stood on Deck-
mont head,
He blew his bugle round,

Till the wild bull in Cadyow wood
Has started at the sound.

Saint George's cross, o'er Bothwell
hung,

Was waving far and wide,
And from the lofty turret flung
Its crimson blaze on Clyde;

And rising at the bugle blast
That marked the Scottish foe,
Old England's yeomen mustered
fast,
And bent the Norman bow.

Tall in the midst Sir Aylmer rose,
Proud Pembroke's Earl was
he —

While —

THE SHEPHERD'S TALE

.
AND ne'er but once, my son, he
says,
Was yon sad cavern trod,
In persecution's iron days
When the land was left by God.

From Bewlie bog with slaughter
red

A wanderer hither drew,
And oft he stopt and turned his
head,

As by fits the night wind blew;

For trampling round by Cheviot
edge

Were heard the troopers keen, ¹⁰
And frequent from the Whitelaw
ridge

The death-shot flashed between.

The moonbeams through the
misty shower

On yon dark cavern fell:
Through the cloudy night the
snow gleamed white,
Which sunbeam ne'er could
quell.

'Yon cavern dark is rough and
rude,
And cold its jaws of snow;
But more rough and rude are the
men of blood
That hunt my life below ! 20

'Yon spell-bound den, as the aged
tell,
Was hewn by demon's hands;
But I had loured melle with the
fiends of hell
Than with Clavers and his band.'

He heard the deep-mouthed blood-
hound bark,
He heard the horses neigh,
He plunged him in the cavern dark,
And downward sped his way.

Now faintly down the winding path
Came the cry of the faulting
hound, 30
And the muttered oath of balked
wrath
Was lost in hollow sound.

He threw him on the flinted floor,
And held his breath for fear;
He rose and bitter cursed his foes,
As the sounds died on his ear.

'O, bare thine arm, thou battling
Lord,
For Scotland's wandering band;
Dash from the oppressor's grasp
the sword,
And sweep him from the land ! 40

'Forget not thou thy people's
groans
From dark Dunnottar's tower,
Mixed with the sea-fowl's shrilly
moans
And ocean's bursting roar !

'O, in fell Clavers' hour of pride,
Even in his mightiest day,
As bold he strides through con-
quest's tide,
O, stretch him on the clay !

'His widow and his little ones,
O, may their tower of trust 50
Remove its strong foundation
stones,
And crush them in the dust !'

'Sweet prayers to me,' a voice re-
plied,
'Thrice welcome, guest of mine !'
And glimmering on the cavern side
A light was seen to shine.

An aged man in amice brown
Stood by the wanderer's side,
By powerful charm a dead man's
arm
The torch's light supplied. 60

From each stiff finger stretched
upright
Arose a ghastly flame,
That waved not in the blast of
night
Which through the cavern came.

O, deadly blue was that taper's
hue
That flamed the cavern o'er,
But more deadly blue was the
ghastly hue
Of his eyes who the taper bore.

He laid on his head a hand like
lead,
As heavy, pale, and cold — 70
'Vengeance be thine, thou guest
of mine,
If thy heart be firm and bold.

'But if faint thy heart, and caitiff
fear
Thy recreant sinews know,
The mountain erne thy heart shall
tear,
Thy nerves the hooded crow.'

The wanderer raised him undis-
mayed:
'My soul, by dangers steeled,
Is stubborn as my Border blade,
Which never knew to yield. 80

'And if thy power can speed the
hour
Of vengeance on my foes,
Theirs be the fate from bridge and
gate
To feed the hooded crows.'

The Brownie looked him in the
face,
And his color fled with speed —
'I fear me,' quoth he, 'uneath it
will be
To match thy word and deed.

'In ancient days when English
bands
Sore ravaged Scotland fair, 90
The sword and shield of Scottish
land
Was valiant Halbert Kerr.

'A warlock loved the warrior
well,
Sir Michael Scott by name,
And he sought for his sake a spell
to make,
Should the Southern foemen
tame.

"Look thou," he said, "from Cess-
ford head
As the July sun sinks low,
And when glimmering white on
Cheviot's height
Thou shalt spy a wreath of
snow, 100
The spell is complete which shall
bring to thy feet
The haughty Saxon foe."

'For many a year wrought the
wizard here
In Cheviot's bosom low,
Till the spell was complete and in
July's heat
Appeared December's snow;
But Cessford's Halbert never came
The wondrous cause to know.

'For years before in Bowden aisle
The warrior's bones had lain, 110

And after short while by female
guile
Sir Michael Scott was slain.

'But me and my brethren in this
cell
His mighty charms retain, —
And he that can quell the power-
ful spell
Shall o'er broad Scotland reign.'

He led him through an iron door
And up a winding stair,
And in wild amaze did the wan-
derer gaze
On the sight which opened
there. 120

Through the gloomy night flashed
ruddy light,
A thousand torches glow;
The cave rose high, like the
vaulted sky,
O'er stalls in double row.

In every stall of that endless hall
Stood a steed in barding bright;
At the foot of each steed, all armed
save the head,
Lay stretched a stalwart knight.

In each mailed hand was a naked
brand;
As they lay on the black bull's
hide, 130
Each visage stern did upwards turn
With eyeballs fixed and wide.

A launcegay strong, full twelve
ells long,
By every warrior hung;
At each pommel there for battle
yare
A Jedwood axe was slung.

The casque hung near each cava-
lier;
The plumes waved mournfully
At every tread which the wanderer
made
Through the hall of gramarye. 140

The ruddy beam of the torches'
gleam,
That glared the warriors on,
Reflected light from armor bright,
In noontide splendor shone.

And onward seen in lustre sheen,
Still lengthening on the sight,
Through the boundless hall stood
steeds in stall,
And by each lay a sable knight.

Still as the dead lay each horse-
man dread,
And moved nor limb nor
tongue; 150
Each steed stood stiff as an earth-
fast cliff,
Nor hoof nor bridle rung.

No sounds through all the spacious
hall
The deadly still divide,
Save where echoes aloof from the
vaulted roof
To the wanderer's step replied.

At length before his wondering
eyes,
On an iron column borne,
Of antique shape and giant size
Appeared a sword and horn. 160

'Now choose thee here,' quoth his
leader,
'Thy venturous fortune try;
Thy woe and weal, thy boot and
bale,
In yon brand and bugle lie.'

To the fatal brand he mounted his
hand,
But his soul did quiver and
quail;
The life-blood did start to his
shuddering heart,
And left him wan and pale.

The brand he forsook, and the
horn he took
To 'say a gentle sound; 170

But so wild a blast from the bugle
brast
That the Cheviot rocked around.

From Forth to Tees, from seas to
seas,
The awful bugle rung;
On Carlisle wall and Berwick
withal
To arms the warders sprung.

With clank and clang the cavern
rang,
The steeds did stamp and neigh;
And loud was the yell as each
warrior fell
Sterte up with hoop and cry. 180

'Woe, woe,' they cried, 'thou cai-
tiff coward,
That ever thou wert born!
Why drew ye not the knightly
sword
Before ye blew the horn?'

The morning on the mountain
shone
And on the bloody ground,
Hurled from the cave with shiv-
ered bone,
The mangled wretch was found.

And still beneath the cavern dread
Among the glidders gray, 190
A shapeless stone with lichens
spread
Marks where the wanderer lay.

CHEVIOT

Go sit old Cheviot's crest below,
And pensive mark the lingering
snow
In all his scaurs abide,
And slow dissolving from the hill
In many a sightless, soundless
rill,
Feed sparkling Bowmont's tide.

Fair shines the stream by bank
and lea,
As wimpling to the eastern sea
She seeks Till's sullen bed,
Indenting deep the fatal plain
Where Scotland's noblest, brave
in vain,
Around their monarch bled.

And westward hills on hills you
see,
Even as old Ocean's mightiest sea
Heaves high her waves of foam,
Dark and snow-ridged from Cuts-
feld's wold
To the proud foot of Cheviot
rolled,
Earth's mountain billows come.

FREDERICK AND ALICE

FREDERICK leaves the land of
France,
Homeward hastes his steps to
measure,
Careless casts the parting glance
On the scene of former pleasure.

Joying in his prancing steed,
Keen to prove his untried blade,
Hope's gay dreams the soldier lead
Over mountain, moor, and glade.

Helpless, ruined, left forlorn,
Lovely Alice wept alone, ¹⁰
Mourned o'er love's fond contract
torn,
Hope and peace and honor
flown.

Mark her breast's convulsive
throbs!
See, the tear of anguish flows!—
Mingling soon with bursting sobs,
Loud the laugh of frenzy rose.

Wild she cursed and wild she
prayed;
Seven long days and nights are
o'er;

Death in pity brought his aid, ¹⁹
As the village bell struck four.

Far from her and far from France,
Faithless Frederick onward
rides;
Marking blithe the morning's
glance
Mantling o'er the mountains'
sides.

Heard ye not the boding sound,
As the tongue of yonder tower
Slowly to the hills around
Told the fourth, the fated hour?

Starts the steed and snuffs the
air,
Yet no cause of dread appears;
Bristles high the rider's hair, ³¹
Struck with strange mysterious
fears.

Desperate, as his terrors rise,
In the steed the spur he hides;
From himself in vain he flies;
Anxious, restless, on he rides.

Seven long days and seven long
nights,
Wild he wandered, woe the
while!
Ceaseless care and causeless fright
Urge his footsteps many a mile.

Dark the seventh sad night de-
scends; ⁴¹
Rivers swell and rain-streams
pour,
While the deafening thunder lends
All the terrors of its roar.

Weary, wet, and spent with toil,
Where his head shall Frederick
hide?

Where but in yon ruined aisle,
By the lightning's flash descried.

To the portal, dank and low,
Fast his steed the wanderer
bound: ⁵⁰

Down a ruined staircase slow
Next his darkling way he wound.

Long drear vaults before him
lie!

Glimmering lights are seen to
glide!—

'Blessed Mary, hear my cry!
Deign a sinner's steps to guide!'

Often lost their quivering beam,
Still the lights move slow be-
fore,

Till they rest their ghastly gleam
Right against an iron door. 60

Thundering voices from within,
Mixed with peals of laughter,
rose;
As they fell, a solemn strain
Lent its wild and wondrous
close!

Midst the din he seemed to hear
Voice of friends by death re-
moved;—

Well he knew that solemn air,
'T was the lay that Alice
loved. —

Hark! for now a solemn knell
Four times on the still night
broke; — 70

Four times at its deadened swell
Echoes from the ruins spoke.

As the lengthened clangors die,
Slowly opes the iron door!
Straight a banquet met his eye,
But a funeral's form it wore!

Coffins for the seats extend;
All with black the board was
spread;

Girt by parent, brother, friend,
Long since numbered with the
dead! 80

Alice, in her grave-clothes bound,
Ghastly smiling, points a seat;

All arose with thundering sound;
All the expected stranger greet.

High their meagre arms they
wave,
Wild their notes of welcome
swell;—

'Welcome, traitor, to the grave!
Perjured, bid the light fare-
well!'

CADYOW CASTLE

ADDRESSED TO THE RIGHT
HONORABLE LADY ANNE HAM-
ILTON

WHEN princely Hamilton's abode
Ennobled Cadyow's Gothic tow-
ers,

The song went round, the goblet
flowed,
And revel sped the laughing
hours.

Then, thrilling to the harp's gay
sound,
So sweetly rung each vaulted
wall,
And echoed light the dancer's
bound,
As mirth and music cheered the
hall.

But Cadyow's towers in ruins laid,
And vaults by ivy mantled o'er,
Thrill to the music of the shade, 11
Or echo Evan's hoarser roar.

Yet still of Cadyow's faded fame
You bid me tell a minstrel tale,
And tune my harp of Border frame
On the wild banks of Evandale.

For thou, from scenes of courtly
pride,
From pleasure's lighter scenes,
canst turn,

To draw oblivion's pall aside 19
And mark the long-forgotten urn.

Then, noble maid! at thy command
Again the crumbled halls shall
rise;

Lo! as on Evan's banks we stand,
The past returns — the present
flies.

Where with the rock's wood-cov-
ered side

Were blended late the ruins
green,

Rise turrets in fantastic pride
And feudal banners flaunt be-
tween:

Where the rude torrent's brawling
course

Was shagged with thorn and
tangling sloe, ³⁰

The ashler buttress braves its
force

And ramparts frown in battled
row.

'T is night — the shade of keep and
spire

Obscurely dance on Evan's
stream;

And on the wave the warder's fire
Is checkering the moonlight
beam.

Fades slow their light; the east is
gray;

The weary warder leaves his
tower;

Steeds snort, uncoupled stag-
hounds bay,

And merry hunters quit the
bower. ⁴⁰

The drawbridge falls — they hurry
out —

Clatters each plank and swinging
chain,

As, dashing o'er, the jovial rout
Urge the shy steed and slack the
rein.

First of his troop, the chief rode on;
His shouting merry-men throng
behind;

The steed of princely Hamilton
Was fleetier than the mountain
wind.

From the thick copse the roebucks
bound,

The startled red-deer scuds the
plain, ⁵⁰

For the hoarse bugle's warrior-
sound

Has roused their mountain
haunts again.

Through the huge oaks of Evan-
dale,

Whose limbs a thousand years
have worn,

What sullen roar comes down the
gale

And drowns the hunter's pealing
horn?

Mightiest of all the beasts of chase
That roam in woody Caledon,

Crashing the forest in his race,
The Mountain Bull comes thun-

dering on. ⁶⁰

Fierce on the hunter's quivered
band

He rolls his eyes of swarthy
glow,

Spurns with black hoof and horn
the sand,

And tosses high his mane of
snow.

Aimed well the chieftain's lance
has flown;

Struggling in blood the savage
lies;

His roar is sunk in hollow groan —
Sound, merry huntsmen! sound

the *pryse*!

'T is noon — against the knotted
oak ⁶⁹

The hunters rest the idle spear;
Curls through the trees the slender

smoke,

Where yeomen dight the wood-
land cheer.

Proudly the chieftain marked his
clan,

On greenwood lap all careless
thrown,

Yet missed his eye the boldest man
That bore the name of Hamilton.

'Why fills not Bothwellhaugh his
place,

Still wont our weal and woe to
share?

Why comes he not our sport to
grace?

Why shares he not our hunter's
fare?' 80

Stern Claud replied with darkening
face —

Gray Paisley's haughty lord was
he —

'At merry feast or buxom chase
Nomore the warrior wilt thou see.

'Few suns have set since Wood-
houselee

Saw Bothwellhaugh's bright gob-
lets foam,

When to his hearths in social glee
The war-worn soldier turned him
home.

'There, wan from her maternal
throes,

His Margaret, beautiful and
mild, 90

Sate in her bower, a pallid rose,
And peaceful nursed her new-
born child.

'O change accursed! past are those
days;

False Murray's ruthless spoilers
came,

And, for the hearth's domestic
blaze,

Ascends destruction's volumed
flame.

'What sheeted phantom wanders
wild

Where mountain Eske through
woodland flows,

Her arms enfold a shadowy child —
O! is it she, the pallid rose? 100

'The wildered traveller sees her
glide,

And hears her feeble voice with
awe —

"Revenge," she cries, "on Murray's
pride!

And woe for injured Bothwell-
haugh!"

He ceased — and cries of rage and
grief

Burst mingling from the kindred
band,

And half arose the kindling chief,
And half unsheathed his Arran
brand.

But who o'er bush, o'er stream and
rock,

Rides headlong with resistless
speed, 110

Whose bloody poniard's frantic
stroke

Drives to the leap his jaded
steed;

Whose cheek is pale, whose eye-
balls glare,

As one some visioned sight that
saw,

Whose hands are bloody, loose his
hair? —

'T is he! 't is he! 't is Bothwell-
haugh.

From gory selle and reeling steed
Sprung the fierce horseman with

a bound,

And, reeking from the recent deed,
He dashed his carbine on the

ground. 120

Sternly he spoke — 'T is sweet to
hear

In good greenwood the bugle
blown,

But sweeter to Revenge's ear
To drink a tyrant's dying groan.

'Your slaughtered quarry proudly
trode
At dawning morn o'er dale and
down,
But prouder base-born Murray
rode
Through old Linlithgow's crowd-
ed town.

'From the wild Border's humbled
side,
In haughty triumph marched
he, 130
While Knox relaxed his bigot pride
And smiled the traitorous pomp
to see.

'But can stern Power, with all his
vaunt,
Or Pomp, with all her courtly
glare,
The settled heart of Vengeance
daunt,
Or change the purpose of De-
spair?

'With hackbut bent, my secret
stand,
Dark as the purposed deed, I
chose,
And marked where mingling in his
band
Trooped Scottish pipes and
English bows. 140

'Dark Morton, girt with many a
spear,
Murder's foul minion, led the
van;
And clashed their broadswords in
the rear
The wild Macfarlanes' plaided
clan.

'Glencairn and stout Parkhead
were nigh,
Obsequious at their Regent's
rein,
And haggard Lindesay's iron eye,
That saw fair Mary weep in
vain.

'Mid pennoned spears, a steely
grove,
Proud Murray's plumage floated
high; 150
Scarce could his trampling charger
move,
So close the minions crowded
nigh.

'From the raised vizor's shade his
eye,
Dark-rolling, glanced the ranks
along,
And his steel truncheon, waved on
high,
Seemed marshalling the iron
throng.

'But yet his saddened brow con-
fessed
A passing shade of doubt and
awe;
Some fiend was whispering in his
breast,
"Beware of injured Bothwell-
haugh!" 160

'The death-shot parts! the charger
springs;
Wild rises tumult's startling
roar!
And Murray's plummy helmet
rings—
Rings on the ground to rise no
more.

'What joy the raptured youth can
feel,
To hear her love the loved one
tell—
Or he who broaches on his steel
The wolf by whom his infant
fell!

'But dearer to my injured eye
To see in dust proud Murray
roll; 170
And mine was ten times trebled
joy
To hear him groan his felon
soul.

'My Margaret's spectre glided
near,
With pride her bleeding victim
saw,
And shrieked in his death-deaf-
ened ear,
"Remember injured Bothwell-
haugh!"

'Then speed thee, noble Chatle-
rault!
Spread to the wind thy bannered
tree!
Each warrior bend his Clydesdale
bow! —
Murray is fallen and Scotland
free!' 180

Vaults every warrior to his steed;
Loud bugles join their wild ac-
claim —
'Murray is fallen and Scotland
freed!
Couch, Arran, couch thy spear
of flame!'

But see! the minstrel vision fails —
The glimmering spears are seen
no more;
The shouts of war die on the gales,
Or sink in Evan's lonely roar.

For the loud bugle pealing high,
The blackbird whistles down the
vale, 190
And sunk in ivied ruins lie
The bannered towers of Evan-
dale.

For chiefs intent on bloody deed,
And Vengeance shouting o'er
the slain,
Lo! high-born Beauty rules the
steed,
Or graceful guides the silken
rein.

And long may Peace and Pleasure
own
The maids who list the minstrel's
tale;

Nor e'er a ruder guest be known
On the fair banks of Evandale!

THE REIVER'S WEDDING

O, WILL ye hear a mirthful boud?
Or will ye hear of courtesie?
Or will ye hear how a gallant lord
Was wedded to a gay ladye?

'Ca' out the kye,' quo' the village
herd,
As he stood on the knowe,
'Ca' this ane's nine and that ane's
ten,
And bauld Lord William's cow.'

'Ah! by my sooth,' quoth William
then,
'And stands it that way now,
When knave and churl have nine
and ten,
That the lord has but his cow?

'I swear by the light of the Mi-
chaelmas moon,
And the might of Mary high,
And by the edge of my braidsword
brown,
They shall soon say Harden's
kye.'

He took a bugle frae his side,
With names carved o'er and
o'er —
Full many a chief of meikle pride
That Border bugle bore —

He blew a note baith sharp and
hie
Till rock and water rang
around —
Threescore of moss-troopers and
three
Have mounted at that bugle
sound.

The Michaelmas moon had entered
then,
And ere she wan the full

Ye might see by her light in Harden glen
A bow o' kye and a bassened bull.

And loud and loud in Harden tower

The quaigh gaed round wi' meikle glee;

For the English beef was brought in bower

And the English ale flowed merilie.

And mony a guest from Teviot-side

And Yarrow's Braes was there;
Was never a lord in Scotland wide

That made more dainty fare,

They ate, they laughed, they sang and quaffed,

Till naught on board was seen,
When knight and squire were boune to dine,

But a spur of silver sheen.

Lord William has ta'en his berry-brown steed —

A sore shent man was he;

'Wait ye, my guests, a little speed —

Weel feasted ye shall be.'

He rode him down by Falsehope burn

His cousin dear to see,
With him to take a riding turn —
Wat-draw-the-Sword was he.

And when he came to Falsehope glen,

Beneath the trysting-tree,
On the smooth green was carved plain,

'To Lochwood bound are we.'

'O, if they be gane to dark Lochwood

To drive the Warden's gear,

Betwixt our names, I ween, there's feud;

I'll go and have my share:

'For little reck I for Johnstone's feud,

The Warden though he be.'

So Lord William is away to dark Lochwood

With riders barely three.

The Warden's daughters in Lochwood sate,

Were all both fair and gay,

All save the Lady Margaret,

And she was wan and wae.

The sister Jean had a full fair skin,

And Grace was bauld and braw;
But the leal-fast heart her breast within

It weel was worth them a'.

Her father's pranked her sisters twa

With meikle joy and pride;

But Margaret maun seek Dundrennan's wa'—

She ne'er can be a bride.

On spear and casque by gallants gent

Her sisters' scarfs were borne,
But never at tilt or tournament
Were Margaret's colors worn.

Her sisters rode to Thirlstane bower,

But she was left at hame
To wander round the gloomy tower,
And sigh young Harden's name.

'Of all the knights, the knight most fair,

From Yarrow to the Tyne,'

Soft sighed the maid, 'is Harden's heir,

But ne'er can he be mine;

'Of all the maids, the foulest maid
From Teviot to the Dee,
Ah!' sighing sad, that lady said,
'Can ne'er young Harden's be.'

She looked up the briery glen,
And up the mossy brae,
And she saw a score of her fa-
ther's men
Yclad in the Johnstone gray.

O, fast and fast they downwards
sped
The moss and briers among,
And in the midst the troopers led
A shackled knight along.

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CHRISTIE'S WILL

TRAQUAIR has ridden up Chapel-
hope,
And sae has he down by the
Gray Mare's Tail;
He never stinted the light gallop,
Until he speered for Christie's
Will.

Now Christie's Will peeped frae
the tower,
And out at the shot-hole keeked
he;
'And ever unlucky,' quo' he, 'is
the hour,
That the Warden comes to speer
for me!'

'Good Christie's Will, now, have
nae fear!
Nae harm, good Will, shall hap
to thee:
I saved thy life at the Jeddart
air,
At the Jeddart air frae the jus-
tice tree.

'Bethink how ye sware, by the
salt and the bread,
By the lightning, the wind, and
the rain,

That if ever of Christie's Will I
had need,
He would pay me my service
again.'

'Gramercy, my lord,' quo' Chris-
tie's Will,
'Gramercy, my lord, for your
grace to me!
When I turn my cheek, and claw
my neck,
I think of Traquair and the Jed-
dart tree.'

And he has opened the fair tower
yate,
To Traquair and a' his companie;
The spule o' the deer on the board
he has set,
The fattest that ran on the Hut-
ton Lee.

'Now, wherefore sit ye sad, my
lord?
And wherefore sit ye mourn-
fullie?
And why eat ye not of the venison
I shot,
At the dead of night on Hutton
Lee?'

'O weel may I stint of feast and
sport,
And in my mind be vexed sair!
A vote of the cankered Session
Court,
Of land and living will make me
bare.

'But if auld Durie to heaven were
flown,
Or if auld Durie to hell were
gane,
Or . . . if he could be but ten days
stoun . . .
My bonny braid lands would still
be my ain.'

'O, mony a time, my lord,' he said,
'I've stown the horse frae the
sleeping loon;

But for you I'll steal a beast as
braid,
For I'll steal Lord Durie frae
Edinburgh toun.

'O, mony a time, my lord,' he said,
'I've stown a kiss frae a sleep-
ing wench;

But for you I'll do as kittle a deed,
For I'll steal an auld lurdane
aff the bench.'

And Christie's Will is to Edin-
burgh gane;

At the Borough Muir then en-
tered he;

And as he passed the gallow-
stane,

He crossed his brow and he bent
his knee:

He lighted at Lord Durie's door,
And there he knocked most
manfullie;

And up and spake Lord Durie sae
stour,

'What tidings, thou stalward
groom, to me?'

'The fairest lady in Teviotdale
Has sent, maist reverent sir, for
thee;

She pleas at the Session for her
land, a' haill,

And fain she wad plead her
cause to thee.'

'But how can I to that lady ride,
With saving of my dignitie?'

'O a curch and mantle ye may
wear,

And in my cloak ye sall muffled
be.'

Wi' curch on head, and cloak
ower face,

He mounted the judge on a pal-
frey fyne;

He rode away, a right round pace,
And Christie's Will held the bri-
dle reyn.

The Lothian Edge they were not
o'er,

When they heard bugles bauldly
ring,

And, hunting over Middleton Moor,
They met, I ween, our noble
King.

When Willie looked upon our
King,

I wot a frightened man was he!

But ever auld Durie was startled
mair,

For tyning of his dignitie.

The King he crossed himself, iwis,
When as the pair came riding
bye —

'An uglier crone, and a sturdier
loon,

I think, were never seen with
eye!'

Willie has hied to the tower of
Græme,

He took auld Durie on his
back,

He shot him down to the dungeon
deep,

Which garred his auld banes gie
mony a crack.

For nineteen days, and nineteen
nights,

Of sun, or moon, or midnight
stern,

Auld Durie never saw a blink,
The lodging was sae dark and
dern.

He thought the warlocks o' the
rosy cross,

Had fanged him in their nets sae
fast;

Or that the gipsies' glamoured gang
Had laired his learning at the
last.

'Hey! Batty, lad! far yaud! far
yaud!'

These were the morning sounds
heard he;
And ever 'Alack!' auld Durie
cried,
'The deil is hounding his tykes
on me!'—

And whiles a voice on *Baudrons*
cried,
With sound uncouth, and sharp,
and hie;
'I have tar-barrelled mony a
witch,
But now, I think, they'll clear
scores wi' me!'

The King has caused a bill be
wrote,
And he has set it on the Tron,—
'He that will bring Lord Durie
back,
Shall have five hundred merks
and one.'

Traquair has written a privie
letter,
And he has sealed it wi' his
seal,—
'Ye may let the auld brock out o'
the poke;
The land's my ain, and a's gane
weel.'—

O Will has mounted his bonny
black,
And to the tower of Græme did
trudge,
And once again, on his sturdy
back,
Has he hente up the weary
judge.

He brought him to the council
stairs,
And there full loudly shouted
he,
'Gie me my guerdon, my sove-
reign liege,
And take ye back your auld
Durie!'

THOMAS THE RHYMER

Ancient.

TRUE THOMAS lay on Huntlie
bank;
A ferlie he spied wi' his ee;
And there he saw a ladye bright,
Come riding down by the Eildon
Tree.

Her skirt was o' the grass-green
silk,
Her mantle o' the velvet fyne;
At ilka tett of her horse's mane,
Hung fifty siller bells and nine.

True Thomas, he pulled aff his cap,
And louted low down to his
knee,
'All hail, thou mighty Queen of
Heaven!
For thy peer on earth I never
did see.'

'O no, O no, Thomas,' she said,
'That name does not belang to
me;
I am but the Queen of fair Elfland,
That am hither come to visit
thee.

'Harp and carp, Thomas,' she
said;
'Harp and carp along wi' me;
And if ye dare to kiss my lips,
Sure of your bodie I will be.'

'Betide me weal, betide me woe,
That weird shall never daunt
me.'—
Syne he has kissed her rosy lips,
All underneath the Eildon Tree.

'Now, ye maun go wi' me,' she
said;
'True Thomas, ye maun go wi'
me;
And ye maun serve me seven
years,
Thro' weal or woe as may chance
to be.'

She mounted on her milk-white
steed;

She's ta'en true Thomas up be-
hind:

And aye, whene'er her bridle rung,
The steed flew swifter than the
wind.

O they rade on, and farther on;
The steed gaed swifter than the
wind;

Until they reached a desert wide,
And living land was left be-
hind.

'Light down, light down, now,
true Thomas,

And lean your head upon my
knee;

Abide and rest a little space,
And I will shew you ferlies
three.

'O see ye not yon narrow road,
So thick beset with thorns and
briers?

That is the path of righteousness,
Though after it] but few en-
quires.

'And see ye not that braid braid
road,

That lies across that lily leven?
That is the path of wickedness,
Though some call it the road to
heaven.

'And see not ye that bonny road,
That winds about the fernie
brae?

That is the road to fair Elfland,
Where thou and I this night
maun gae.

'But, Thomas, ye maun hold your
tongue,

Whatever ye may hear or see;
For, if you speak word in Elflyn
land,

Ye'll ne'er get back to your ain
countrie.'

O they rade on, and farther on,
And they waded through rivers
aboon the knee,

And they saw neither sun nor
moon,

But they heard the roaring of the
sea.

It was mirk mirk night, and there
was nae stern light,

And they waded through red
blude to the knee;

For a' the blude that's shed on
earth

Rins through the springs o' that
countrie.

Syne they came on to a garden
green,

And she pu'd an apple frae a
tree—

'Take this for thy wages, true
Thomas;

It will give thee the tongue that
can never lie.'

'My tongue is mine ain,' true
Thomas said:

'A gudely gift ye wad gie to
me!

I neither dought to buy nor sell,
At fair or tryst where I may
be.

'I dought neither speak to prince
or peer,

Nor ask of grace from fair
ladye.'

'Now hold thy peace!' the lady
said,

'For as I say, so must it be.'

He has gotten a coat of the even
cloth,

And a pair of shoes of velvet
green;

And till seven years were gane
and past,

True Thomas on earth was never
seen.

PART SECOND

Altered from ancient prophecies.

WHEN seven years were come and
gane,
The sun blinked fair on pool and
stream;
And Thomas lay on Huntlie bank,
Like one awakened from a
dream.

He heard the trampling of a steed,
He saw the flash of armor flee,
And he beheld a gallant knight
Come riding down by the Eildon-
tree.

He was a stalwart knight, and
strong;
Of giant make he 'peared to
be:
He stirred his horse, as he were
wode,
Wi' gilded spurs, of faushion
free.

Says — 'Well met, well met, true
Thomas!
Some uncouth ferlies show to
me.'
Says — 'Christ thee save, Corspat-
rick brave
Thrice welcume, good Dunbar,
to me!

'Light down, light down, Corspat-
rick brave!
And I will show thee curses
three,
Shall gar fair Scotland greet and
grane,
And change the green to the
black livery.

'A storm shall roar this very hour,
From Ross's Hills to Solway
sea.'

'Ye lied, ye lied, ye warlock hoar!
For the sun shines sweet on
fauld and lea.'

He put his hand on the Earlie's
head;

He showed him a rock beside the
sea,
Where a king lay stiff beneath his
steed,
And steel-dight nobles wiped
their ee.

'The neist curse lights on Branx-
ton hills:
By Flodden's high and heathery
side,
Shall wave a banner red as blude,
And chieftains throng wi' meikle
pride.

'A Scottish King shall come full
keen,
The ruddy lion beareth he;
A feathered arrow sharp, I ween,
Shall make him wink and warre
to see.

'When he is bloody, and all to
bledde,
Thus to his men he still shall
say —

"For God's sake, turn ye back
again,
And give yon southern folk a
fray!
Why should I lose the right is
mine?
My doom is not to die this day."

'Yet turn ye to the eastern hand,
And woe and wonder ye sall
see;
How forty thousand spearmen
stand,
Where yon rank river meets the
sea.

'There shall the lion lose the gylte,
And the libbards bear it clean
away;

At Pinkyn Cleuch there shall be
spilt
Much gentil bluid that day.'

'Enough, enough of curse and
ban;
Some blessings show thou now
to me,
Or, by the faith o' my bodie,' Cors-
patrick said,
'Ye shall rue the day ye e'er saw
me!'

'The first of blessings I shall thee
show,
Is by a burn, that's called of
bread;
Where Saxon men shall tine the
bow,
And find their arrows lack the
head.

'Beside that brigg, out ower that
burn,
Where the water bickereth
bright and sheen
Shall many a falling courser
spurn,
And knights shall die in battle
keen.

'Beside a headless cross of stone,
The libbards there shall lose the
gree;
The raven shall come, the erne
shall go,
And drink the Saxon bluid sae
free.
The cross of stone they shall not
know,
So thick the corses there shall
be.'

'But tell me now,' said brave Dun-
bar
'True Thomas, tell now unto
me,
What man shall rule the isle Bri-
tain,
Even from the north to the south-
ern sea?'

'A French Queen shall bear the
son,
Shall rule all Britain to the sea;

He of the Bruce's blood shall
come,
As near as in the ninth degree.

'The waters worship shall his
race;
Likewise the waves of the far-
thest sea;
For they shall ride over ocean
wide,
With hempen bridles, and horse
of tree.'

PART THIRD

Modern.

WHEN seven years more were
come and gone,
Was war through Scotland
spread,
And Ruberslaw showed high Dun-
yon
His beacon blazing red.

Then all by bonny Coldingknow,
Pitched palliouns took their
room,
And crested helmets, and spears
a-rowe,
Glanced gaily through the
broom,

The Leader, rolling to the Tweed,
Resounds the ensenzie;
They roused the deer from Cad-
denhead,
To distant Torwoodlee.

The feast was spread in Ercil-
doune.
In Learmont's high and ancient
hall:
And there were knights of great
renown,
And ladies, laced in pall.

Nor lacked they, while they sat at
dine,
The music nor the tale,

Nor goblets of the blood-red wine,
Nor mantling quaighs of ale.

True Thomas rose, with harp in hand,
When as the feast was done :
(In minstrel strife, in Fairy Land,
The elfin harp he won.)

Hushed were the throng, both limb
and tongue,
And harpers for envy pale ;
And armed lords leaned on their
swords,
And hearkened to the tale.

In numbers high, the witching
tale
The prophet poured along ;
No after bard might e'er avail
Those numbers to prolong.

Yet fragments of the lofty strain
Float down the tide of years,
As, buoyant on the stormy main,
A parted wreck appears.

He sung King Arthur's Table
Round :
The Warrior of the Lake ;
How courteous Gawaine met the
wound,
And bled for ladies' sake.

But chief, in gentle Tristrem's
praise,
The notes melodious swell ;
Was none excelled in Arthur's
days,
The knight of Lionelle.

For Marke, his cowardly uncle's
right,
A venomed wound he bore ;
When fierce Morholde he slew in
fight,
Upon the Irish shore.

No art the poison might with-
stand ;
No medicine could be found,

Till lovely Isolde's lily hand
Had probed the rankling wound.

With gentle hand and soothing
tongue
She bore the leech's part ;
And, while she o'er his sick-bed
hung,
He paid her with his heart.

O fatal was the gift, I ween !
For, doomed in evil tide,
The maid must be rude Cornwall's
queen,
His cowardly uncle's bride.

Their loves, their woes, the gifted
bard,
In fairy tissue wove ;
Where lords, and knights, and la-
dies bright,
In gay confusion strove.

The Garde Joyeuse, amid the tale,
High reared its glittering head ;
And Avalon's enchanted vale
In all its wonders spread.

Brangwain was there, and Segra-
more,
And fiend-born Merlin's grama-
rye ;
Of that famed wizard's mighty lore,
O who could sing but he ?

Through many a maze the winning
song
In changeful passion led,
Till bent at length the listening
throne
O'er Tristrem's dying bed.

His ancient wounds their scars ex-
pand,
With agony his heart is wrung :
O where is Isolde's lily hand,
And where her soothing tongue ?

She comes ! she comes ! — like flash
of flame
Can lovers' footsteps fly :

She comes! she comes!—she only
came
To see her Tristrem die.

She saw him die; her latest sigh
Joined in a kiss his parting
breath;
The gentlest pair, that Britain
bare,
United are in death.

There paused the harp: its lin-
gering sound
Died slowly on the ear;
The silent guests still bent around,
For still they seemed to hear.

Then woe broke forth in murmurs
weak,
Nor ladies heaved alone the
sigh;
But, half ashamed, the rugged
cheek
Did many a gauntlet dry.

On Leader's stream, and Lear-
mont's tower,
The mists of evening close;
In camp, in castle, or in bower,
Each warrior sought repose.

Lord Douglas, in his lofty tent,
Dreamed o'er the woful tale;
When footsteps light, across the
bent,
The warrior's ear assail.

He starts, he wakes;—'What
Richard, ho!
Arise, my page, arise!
What venturous wight, at dead of
night,
Dare step where Douglas lies!'

Then forth they rushed: by Lead-
er's tide,
A selcouth sight they see—
A hart and hind pace side by
side,
As white as snow on Fairna-
lie.

Beneath the moon, with gesture
proud,
They stately move and slow;
Nor scare they at the gathering
crowd,
Who marvel as they go.

To Learmont's tower a message
sped,
As fast as page might run;
And Thomas started from his bed,
And soon his clothes did on.

First he woxe pale, and then woxe
red;
Never a word he spake but
three;—
'My sand is run; my thread is
spun;
This sign regardeth me.'

The elfin harp his neck around,
In minstrel guise he hung;
And on the wind, in doleful sound,
Its dying accents rung.

Then forth he went; yet turned
him oft
To view his ancient hall:
On the grey tower, in lustre soft,
The autumn moonbeams fall;

And Leader's waves, like silver
sheen,
Danced shimmering in the ray;
In deepening mass, at distance
seen,
Broad Soltra's mountains lay.

'Farewell, my father's ancient
tower!
A long farewell,' said he:
'The scene of pleasure, pomp, or
power,
Thou never more shalt be.

'To Learmont's name no foot of
earth
Shall here again belong,
And, on thy hospitable hearth,
The hare shall leave her young.

'Adieu! adieu!' again he cried,
 All as he turned him roun' —
 'Farewell to Leader's silver tide!
 Farewell to Ercildoune!'

The hart and hind approached the
 place,
 As lingering yet he stood;
 And there, before Lord Douglas'
 face,
 With them he crossed the flood.

Lord Douglas leaped on his berry-
 brown steed,
 And spurred him the Leader
 o'er;
 But, though he rode with lightning
 speed,
 He never saw them more.

Some said to hill, and some to
 glen,
 Their wondrous course had
 been;
 But ne'er in haunts of living men
 Again was Thomas seen.

THE BARD'S INCANTATION

WRITTEN UNDER THE THREAT
 OF INVASION IN THE AUTUMN
 OF 1804.

THE forest of Glenmore is drear,
 It is all of black pine and the
 dark oak-tree;
 And the midnight wind to the
 mountain deer
 Is whistling the forest lullaby:
 The moon looks through the drift-
 ing storm,
 But the troubled lake reflects not
 her form,
 For the waves roll whitening to
 the land,
 And dash against the shelvystrand.

There is a voice among the trees
 That mingles with the groaning
 oak —

That mingles with the stormy
 breeze,
 And the lake-waves dashing
 against the rock; —
 There is a voice within the wood,
 The voice of the bard in fitful
 mood;
 His song was louder than the
 blast,
 As the bard of Glenmore through
 the forest past.

'Wake ye from your sleep of
 death,
 Minstrels and bards of other
 days!
 For the midnight wind is on the
 heath,
 And the midnight meteors
 dimly blaze:
 The Spectre with his Bloody
 Hand
 Is wandering through the wild
 woodland;
 The owl and the raven are mute
 for dread,
 And the time is meet to awake
 the dead!

'Souls of the mighty, wake and
 say
 To what high strain your
 harps were strung,
 When Lochlin ploughed her bil-
 lowy way
 And on your shores her Norse-
 men flung?
 Her Norsemen trained to spoil
 and blood,
 Skilled to prepare the raven's
 food,
 All by your harpings doomed to
 die
 On bloody Largs and Loncarty.

'Mute are ye all? No murmurs
 strange
 Upon the midnight breeze sail
 by,
 Nor through the pines with
 whistling change

Mimic the harp's wild harmony!

Mute are ye now?—Ye ne'er were mute

When Murder with his bloody foot,

And Rapine with his iron hand,
Were hovering near yon mountain strand.

'O, yet awake the strain to tell,
By every deed in song enrolled,
By every chief who fought or fell,
For Albion's weal in battle bold:—

From Coilgach, first who rolled his car

Through the deep ranks of Roman war,

To him of veteran memory dear
Who victor died on Aboukir.

'By all their swords, by all their scars,

By all their names, a mighty spell!

By all their wounds, by all their wars,

Arise, the mighty strain to tell!
For fiercer than fierce Hengist's strain,

More impious than the heathen Dane,

More grasping than all-grasping Rome,

Gaul's ravening legions hither come!'

The wind is hushed and still the lake—

Strange murmurs fill my tinkling ears,

Bristles my hair, my sinews quake,
At the dread voice of other years—

'When targets clashed and bugles rung,

And blades round warriors' heads were flung,

The foremost of the band were we

And hymned the joys of Liberty!'

HELLVELLYN

I CLIMBED the dark brow of the mighty Hellvellyn,

Lakes and mountains beneath me gleamed misty and wide;

All was still save by fits, when the eagle was yelling,

And starting around me the echoes replied.

On the right, Striden-edge round the Red-tarn was bending,

And Catchedicam its left verge was defending,

One huge nameless rock in the front was ascending,

When I marked the sad spot where the wanderer had died.

Dark green was that spot mid the brown mountain heather,

Where the Pilgrim of Nature lay stretched in decay,

Like the corpse of an outcast abandoned to weather

Till the mountain-winds wasted the tenantless clay.

Nor yet quite deserted, though lonely extended,

For, faithful in death, his mute favorite attended,

The much-loved remains of her master defended,

And chased the hill-fox and the raven away.

How long didst thou think that his silence was slumber?

When the wind waved his garment, how oft didst thou start?

How many long days and long weeks didst thou number,

Ere he faded before thee, the friend of thy heart?

And O, was it meet that—no requiem read o'er him,

No mother to weep and no friend to deplore him,

And thou, little guardian, alone stretched before him—

Unhonored the Pilgrim from life should depart?

When a prince to the fate of the
 peasant has yielded,
 The tapestry waves dark round
 the dim-lighted hall;
 With scutcheons of silver the coffin
 is shielded,
 And pages stand mute by the
 canopied pall:
 Through the courts at deep mid-
 night the torches are gleam-
 ing;
 In the proudly arched chapel the
 banners are beaming;
 Far adown the long aisle sacred
 music is streaming,
 Lamenting a chief of the people
 should fall.

But meeter for thee, gentle lover
 of nature,
 To lay down thy head like the
 meek mountain lamb,
 When wildered he drops from some
 cliff huge in stature,
 And draws his last sob by the
 side of his dam.
 And more stately thy couch by
 this desert lake lying,
 Thy obsequies sung by the gray
 plover flying,
 With one faithful friend but to
 witness thy dying
 In the arms of Hellvellyn and
 Catchedicam.

THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL

INTRODUCTION

THE way was long, the wind was
 cold,
 The Minstrel was infirm and old;
 His withered cheek and tresses
 gray
 Seemed to have known a better
 day;
 The harp, his sole remaining joy,
 Was carried by an orphan boy.
 The last of all the bards was he,
 Who sung of Border chivalry;
 For, well-a-day! their date was
 fled,
 His tuneful brethren all were
 dead;
 And he, neglected and oppressed,
 Wished to be with them and at
 rest.
 No more on prancing palfrey
 borne
 He carolled, light as lark at morn;
 No longer courted and caressed,
 High placed in hall, a welcome
 guest,
 He poured, to lord and lady gay,
 The unpremeditated lay:

Old times were changed, old man-
 ners gone;
 A stranger filled the Stuarts'
 throne;
 The bigots of the iron time
 Had called his harmless art a
 crime.
 A wandering harper, scorned and
 poor,
 He begged his bread from door to
 door,
 And tuned, to please a peasant's
 ear,
 The harp a king had loved to hear.
 He passed where Newark's stately
 tower
 Looks out from Yarrow's birchen
 bower:
 The Minstrel gazed with wishful
 eye—
 No humbler resting-place was
 nigh.
 With hesitating step at last
 The embattled portal arch he
 passed,
 Whose ponderous grate and massy
 bar

Had oft rolled back the tide of war,
 But never closed the iron door
 Against the desolate and poor.
 The Duchess marked his weary pace,
 His timid mien, and reverend face,
 And bade her page the menials tell
 That they should tend the old man well: 40
 For she had known adversity,
 Though born in such a high degree;
 In pride of power, in beauty's bloom,
 Had wept o'er Monmouth's bloody tomb!

When kindness had his wants supplied,
 And the old man was gratified,
 Began to rise his minstrel pride;
 And he began to talk anon
 Of good Earl Francis, dead and gone,
 And of Earl Walter, rest him God! 50
 A braver ne'er to battle rode;
 And how full many a tale he knew
 Of the old warriors of Buccleuch:
 And, would the noble Duchess deign
 To listen to an old man's strain,
 Though stiff his hand, his voice though weak,
 He thought even yet, the sooth to speak,
 That, if she loved the harp to hear,
 He could make music to her ear.

The humble boon was soon obtained; 60
 The aged Minstrel audience gained.
 But when he reached the room of state
 Where she with all her ladies sate,
 Perchance he wished his boon denied:

For, when to tune his harp he tried,
 His trembling hand had lost the ease
 Which marks security to please;
 And scenes, long past, of joy and pain
 Came wildering o'er his aged brain — 69
 He tried to tune his harp in vain.
 The pitying Duchess praised its chime,
 And gave him heart, and gave him time,
 Till every string's according glee
 Was blended into harmony.
 And then, he said, he would full fain
 He could recall an ancient strain
 He never thought to sing again.
 It was not framed for village churls,
 But for high dames and mighty earls;
 He had played it to King Charles the Good 80
 When he kept court in Holyrood;
 And much he wished, yet feared, to try
 The long-forgotten melody.
 Amid the strings his fingers strayed,
 And an uncertain warbling made,
 And oft he shook his hoary head.
 But when he caught the measure wild,
 The old man raised his face and smiled;
 And lightened up his faded eye
 With all a poet's ecstasy! 90
 In varying cadence, soft or strong,
 He swept the sounding chords along:
 The present scene, the future lot,
 His toils, his wants, were all forgot;
 Cold diffidence and age's frost
 In the full tide of song were lost;
 Each blank, in faithless memory void,

The poet's glowing thought supplied;
 And, while his harp responsive rung,
 'T was thus the LATEST MINSTREL sung.

CANTO FIRST

I

THE feast was over in Branksome tower,
 And the Ladye had gone to her secret bower,
 Her bower that was guarded by word and by spell,
 Deadly to hear, and deadly to tell—
 Jesu Maria, shield us well!
 No living wight, save the Ladye alone,
 Had dared to cross the threshold stone.

II

The tables were drawn, it was idlesse all;
 Knight and page and household squire
 Loitered through the lofty hall, 10
 Or crowded round the ample fire:
 The stag-hounds, weary with the chase,
 Lay stretched upon the rushy floor,
 And urged in dreams the forest race,
 From Teviot-stone to Eskdale-moor.

III

Nine-and-twenty knights of fame
 Hung their shields in Branksome Hall;
 Nine-and-twenty squires of name
 Brought them their steeds to bower from stall; 19
 Nine-and-twenty yeomen tall
 Waited duteous on them all:

They were all knights of mettle true,
 Kinsmen to the bold Buccleuch.

IV

Ten of them were sheathed in steel,
 With belted sword and spur on heel;
 They quitted not their harness bright,
 Neither by day nor yet by night:
 They lay down to rest,
 With corselet laced,
 Pillowed on buckler cold and hard; 30
 They carved at the meal
 With gloves of steel,
 And they drank the red wine
 through the helmet barred.

V

Ten squires, ten yeomen, mail-clad men,
 Waited the beck of the warders ten;
 Thirty steeds, both fleet and wight,
 Stood saddled in stable day and night,
 Barded with frontlet of steel, I trow,
 And with Jedwood-axe at saddle-bow;
 A hundred more fed free in stall:— 40
 Such was the custom of Branksome Hall.

VI

Why do these steeds stand ready dight?
 Why watch these warriors armed by night?
 They watch to hear the blood-hound baying;
 They watch to hear the war-horn braying;
 To see Saint George's red cross streaming,
 To see the midnight beacon gleaming;
 ing;

They watch against Southern force
and guile,
Lest Scroop or Howard or Percy's powers
Threaten Branksome's lordly
towers, 50
From Warkworth or Naworth or
merry Carlisle.

VII

Such is the custom of Branksome
Hall.

Many a valiant knight is here :
But he, the chieftain of them all,
His sword hangs rusting on the
wall

Beside his broken spear.
Bards long shall tell
How Lord Walter fell !
When startled burghers fled afar
The furies of the Border war, 60
When the streets of high Dunedin
Saw lances gleam and falchions
reddeu,
And heard the slogan's deadly
yell,—
Then the Chief of Branksome fell.

VIII

Can piety the discord heal,
Or stanch the death-feud's en-
mity ?
Can Christian lore, can patriot
zeal,
Can love of blessed charity ?
No ! vainly to each holy shrine 69
In mutual pilgrimage they drew,
Implored in vain the grace divine
For chiefs their own red falchions
slew.
While Cessford owns the rule of
Carr,
While Ettrick boasts the line of
Scott,
The slaughtered chiefs, the mortal
jar,
The havoc of the feudal war,
Shall never, never be forgot !

IX

In sorrow o'er Lord Walter's bier
The warlike foresters had bent,

And many a flower and many a
tear 80

Old Teviot's maids and matrons
lent :

But o'er her warrior's bloody bier
The Ladye dropped nor flower nor
tear !

Vengeance, deep-brooding o'er the
slain,

Had locked the source of softer
woe,

And burning pride and high disdain
Forbade the rising tear to flow ;
Until, amid his sorrowing clan,

Her son lisped from the nurse's
knee,

' And if I live to be a man, 90
My father's death revenged shall
be ! '

Then fast the mother's tears did
seek

To dew the infant's kindling cheek.

X

All loose her negligent attire,
All loose her golden hair,
Hung Margaret o'er her slaugh-
tered sire

And wept in wild despair.
But not alone the bitter tear

Had filial grief supplied, 99
For hopeless love and anxious fear

Had lent their mingled tide ;
Nor in her mother's altered eye
Dared she to look for sympathy.

Her lover 'gainst her father's clan
With Carr in arms had stood,

When Mathouse-burn to Melrose
ran

All purple with their blood ;
And well she knew her mother
dread,

Before Lord Cranstoun she should
wed, 109

Would see her on her dying bed.

XI

Of noble race the Ladye came ;
Her father was a clerk of fame
Of Bethune's line of Picardie :

He learned the art that none may
name

In Padua, far beyond the sea.
 Men said he changed his mortal
 frame
 By feat of magic mystery ;
 For when in studious mood he
 paced
 Saint Andrew's cloistered hall,
 His form no darkening shadow
 traced 120
 Upon the sunny wall !

XII

And of his skill, as bards avow,
 He taught that Ladye fair,
 Till to her bidding she could bow
 The viewless forms of air.
 And now she sits in secret bower,
 In old Lord David's western
 tower,
 And listens to a heavy sound
 That moans the mossy turrets
 round.
 Is it the roar of Teviot's tide, 130
 That chafes against the scaur's
 red side ?
 Is it the wind, that swings the
 oaks ?
 Is it the echo from the rocks ?
 What may it be, the heavy sound,
 That moans old Branksome's tur-
 rets round ?

XIII

At the sullen, moaning sound
 The ban-dogs bay and howl,
 And from the turrets round
 Loud whoops the startled owl.
 In the hall, both squire and knight
 Swore that a storm was near, 141
 And looked forth to view the
 night ;
 But the night was still and clear !

XIV

From the sound of Teviot's tide,
 Chafing with the mountain's side,
 From the groan of the wind-swung
 oak,
 From the sullen echo of the rock,
 From the voice of the coming
 storm,

The Ladye knew it well !
 It was the Spirit of the Flood that
 spoke, 150
 And he called on the Spirit of
 the Fell.

XV

RIVER SPIRIT

'Sleep'st thou, brother ?'

MOUNTAIN SPIRIT

'Brother, nay —
 On my hills the moonbeams play.
 From Craik-cross to Skelfhill-pen,
 By every rill, in every glen,
 Merry elves their morris pacing,
 To aerial minstrelsy,
 Emerald rings on brown heath
 tracing,
 Trip it deft and merrily. 159
 Up, and mark their nimble feet !
 Up, and list their music sweet !'

XVI

RIVER SPIRIT

'Tears of an imprisoned maiden
 Mix with my polluted stream ;
 Margaret of Branksome, sorrow-
 laden,
 Mourns beneath the moon's pale
 beam.
 Tell me, thou who view'st the stars,
 When shall cease these feudal
 jars ?
 What shall be the maiden's fate ?
 Who shall be the maiden's mate ?'

XVII

MOUNTAIN SPIRIT

'Arthur's slow wain his course
 doth roll 170
 In utter darkness round the pole ;
 The Northern Bear lowers black
 and grim,
 Orion's studded belt is dim ;
 Twinkling faint, and distant far,
 Shimmers through mist each
 planet star ;

Ill may I read their high decree:
 But no kind influence deign they
 shower
 On Teviot's tide and Branksome's
 tower
 Till pride be quelled and love be
 free.'

XVIII

The unearthly voices ceased, 180
 And the heavy sound was still;
 It died on the river's breast,
 It died on the side of the hill.
 But round Lord David's tower
 The sound still floated near;
 For it rung in the Ladye's bower,
 And it rung in the Ladye's ear.
 She raised her stately head,
 And her heart throbb'd high
 with pride:
 'Your mountains shall bend 190
 And your streams ascend,
 Ere Margaret be our foeman's
 bride!'

XIX

The Ladye sought the lofty hall,
 Where many a bold retainer lay,
 And with jocund din among them
 all
 Her son pursued his infant play.
 A fancied moss-trooper, the boy
 The truncheon of a spear be-
 strode,
 And round the hall right merrily
 In mimic foray rode. 200
 Even bearded knights, in arms
 grown old,
 Share in his frolic gambols bore,
 Albeit their hearts of rugged mould
 Were stubborn as the steel they
 wore.
 For the gray warriors prophesied
 How the brave boy in future
 war
 Should tame the Unicorn's pride,
 Exalt the Crescents and the Star.

XX

The Ladye forgot her purpose high
 One moment and no more, 210

One moment gazed with a mother's
 eye
 As she paused at the arched
 door;
 Then from amid the armed train
 She called to her William of
 Deloraine.

XXI

A stark moss-trooping Scott was he
 As e'er couched Border lance by
 knee:
 Through Solway Sands, through
 Tarras Moss,
 Blindfold he knew the paths to
 cross;
 By wily turns, by desperate bounds,
 Had baffled Percy's best blood-
 hounds; 220
 In Eske or Liddel fords were none
 But he would ride them, one by
 one;
 Alike to him was time or tide,
 December's snow or July's pride;
 Alike to him was tide or time,
 Moonless midnight or matin prime:
 Steady of heart and stout of hand
 As ever drove prey from Cumber-
 land;
 Five times outlawed had he been
 By England's king and Scotland's
 queen. 230

XXII

'Sir William of Deloraine, good at
 need,
 Mount thee on the wightest steed;
 Spare not to spur nor stint to ride
 Until thou come to fair Tweedside;
 And in Melrose's holy pile
 Seek thou the Monk of Saint Mary's
 aisle.
 Greet the father well from me;
 Say that the fated hour is come,
 And to-night he shall watch with
 thee, 239
 To win the treasure of the tomb:
 For this will be Saint Michael's
 night,
 And though stars be dim the moon
 is bright,

And the cross of bloody red
Will point to the grave of the
mighty dead.

XXIII

'What he gives thee, see thou
keep;
Stay not thou for food or sleep:
Be it scroll or be it book,
Into it, knight, thou must not look;
If thou readest, thou art lorn! ²⁴⁹
Better hadst thou ne'er been born!'

XXIV

'O swiftly can speed my dapple-
gray steed,
Which drinks of the Teviot clear;
Ere break of day,' the warrior gan
say,
'Again will I be here:
And safer by none may thy errand
be done
Than, noble dame, by me;
Letter nor line know I never one,
Were 't my neck-verse at Hairi-
bee.'

XXV

Soon in his saddle sate he fast,
And soon the steep descent he
passed, ²⁶⁰
Soon crossed the sounding barbi-
can,
And soon the Teviot side he won.
Eastward the wooded path he rode,
Green hazels o'er his basnet nod;
He passed the Peel of Goldiland,
And crossed old Borthwick's roar-
ing strand;
Dimly he viewed the Moat-hill's
mound,
Where Druid shades still flitted
round:
In Hawick twinkled many a light;
Behind him soon they set in night;
And soon he spurred his courser
keen ²⁷¹
Beneath the tower of Hazeldean.

XXVI

The clattering hoofs the watchmen
mark:

'Stand, ho! thou courier of the
dark.'

'For Branksome, ho!' the knight
rejoined,

And left the friendly tower behind.
He turned him now from Teviot-
side,

And, guided by the tinkling rill,
Northward the dark ascent did
ride,

And gained the moor at Horse-
liehill; ²⁸⁰

Broad on the left before him lay
For many a mile the Roman way.

XXVII

A moment now he slacked his
speed,

A moment breathed his panting
steed,

Drew saddle-girth and corslet-
band,

And loosened in the sheath his
brand.

On Minto-crag the moonbeams
glint,

Where Barnhill hewed his bed of
flint,

Who flung his outlawed limbs to
rest

Where falcons hang their giddy
nest ²⁹⁰

Mid cliffs from whence his eagle
eye

For many a league his prey could
spy;

Cliffs doubling, on their echoes
borne,

The terrors of the robber's horn;
Cliffs which for many a later year

The warbling Doricreed shall hear,
When some sad swain shall teach

the grove

Ambition is no cure for love.

XXVIII

Unchallenged, thence passed Delo-
raine ²⁹⁹

To ancient Riddel's fair domain,
Where Aill, from mountains
freed,

Down from the lakes did raving
come ;
Each wave was crested with tawny
foam,
Like the mane of a chestnut
steed.
In vain ! no torrent, deep or broad,
Might bar the bold moss-trooper's
road.

XXIX

At the first plunge the horse sunk
low,
And the water broke o'er the sad-
dle-bow :
Above the foaming tide, I ween,
Scarce half the charger's neck was
seen ; 310
For he was barded from counter
to tail,
And the rider was armed complete
in mail ;
Never heavier man and horse
Stemmed a midnight torrent's
force.
The warrior's very plume, I say,
Was daggled by the dashing
spray ;
Yet, through good heart and Our
Ladye's grace,
At length he gained the landing-
place.

XXX

Now Bowden Moor the march-man
won,
And sternly shook his plumed
head, 320
As glanced his eye o'er Halidon ;
For on his soul the slaughter
red
Of that unhallowed morn arose,
When first the Scott and Carr
were foes ;
When royal James beheld the
fray,
Prize to the victor of the day ;
When Home and Douglas in the
van
Bore down Buccleuch's retiring
clan,

Till gallant Cessford's heart-blood
dear
Reeked on dark Elliot's Border
spear. 330

XXXI

In bitter mood he spurred fast,
And soon the hated heath was
past ;
And far beneath, in lustre wan,
Old Melros' rose and fair Tweed
ran :
Like some tall rock with lichens
gray,
Seemed, dimly huge, the dark Ab-
baye.
When Hawick he passed had cur-
few rung,
Now midnight lauds were in Mel-
rose sung.
The sound upon the fitful gale
In solemn wise did rise and fall, 340
Like that wild harp whose magic
tone
Is wakened by the winds alone.
But when Melrose he reached
't was silence all ;
He meetly stabled his steed in
stall,
And sought the convent's lonely
wall.

HERE paused the harp ; and with
its swell
The Master's fire and courage
fell :
Dejectedly and low he bowed,
And, gazing timid on the crowd,
He seemed to seek in every eye 350
If they approved his minstrelsy ;
And, diffident of present praise,
Somewhat he spoke of former
days,
And how old age and wandering
long
Had done his hand and harp some
wrong.
The Duchess, and her daughters
fair,
And every gentle lady there,

Each after each, in due degree,
 Gave praises to his melody;
 His hand was true, his voice was
 clear, 360
 And much they longed the rest to
 hear.
 Encouraged thus, the aged man
 After meet rest again began.

CANTO SECOND

I

If thou wouldst view fair Melrose
 aright,
 Go visit it by the pale moonlight;
 For the gay beams of lightsome
 day
 Gild but to flout the ruins gray.
 When the broken arches are black
 in night,
 And each shafted oriel glimmers
 white;
 When the cold light's uncertain
 shower
 Streams on the ruined central
 tower;
 When buttress and buttress, alter-
 nately,
 Seem framed of ebon and ivory; 10
 When silver edges the imagery,
 And the scrolls that teach thee to
 live and die;
 When distant Tweed is heard to
 rave,
 And the owlet to hoot o'er the
 dead man's grave,
 Then go—but go alone the while—
 Then view Saint David's ruined
 pile;
 And, home returning, soothly
 swear
 Was never scene so sad and fair!

II

Short halt did Deloraine make
 there;
 Little recked he of the scene so
 fair: 20
 With dagger's hilt on the wicket
 strong

He struck full loud, and struck
 full long.
 The porter hurried to the gate:
 'Who knocks so loud, and knocks
 so late?'
 'From Branksome I,' the warrior
 cried;
 And straight the wicket opened
 wide:
 For Branksome's chiefs had in
 battle stood
 To fence the rights of fair Mel-
 rose;
 And lands and livings, many a
 rood,
 Had gifted the shrine for their
 souls' repose. 30

III

Bold Deloraine his errand said;
 The porter bent his humble head;
 With torch in hand, and feet un-
 shod,
 And noiseless step, the path he
 trod:
 The arched cloister, far and wide,
 Rang to the warrior's clanking
 stride,
 Till, stooping low his lofty crest,
 He entered the cell of the ancient
 priest,
 And lifted his barred aventayle
 To hail the Monk of Saint Mary's
 aisle. 40

IV

'The Ladye of Branksome greets
 thee by me,
 Says that the fated hour is
 come,
 And that to-night I shall watch
 with thee,
 To win the treasure of the tomb.'
 From sackcloth couch the monk
 arose,
 With toil his stiffened limbs he
 reared;
 A hundred years had flung their
 snows
 On his thin locks and floating
 beard.

V

And strangely on the knight looked
he,

And his blue eyes gleamed wild
and wide : 50

'And darest thou, warrior, seek to
see

What heaven and hell alike
would hide ?

My breast in belt of iron pent,
With shirt of hair and scourge of
thorn,

For threescore years, in penance
spent,

My knees those flinty stones
have worn ;

Yet all too little to atone
For knowing what should ne'er be
known.

Wouldst thou thy every future year
In ceaseless prayer and penance
drie, 60

Yet wait thy latter end with fear —
Then, daring warrior, follow
me !'

VI

'Penance, father, will I none ;
Prayer know I hardly one ;
For mass or prayer can I rarely
tarry,

Save to patter an Ave Mary,
When I ride on a Border foray.

Other prayer can I none ;
So speed me my errand, and let me
be gone.'

VII

Again on the knight looked the
churchman old, 70

And again he sighed heavily ;
For he had himself been a warrior
bold,

And fought in Spain and Italy.
And he thought on the days that
were long since by,

When his limbs were strong and
his courage was high :

Now, slow and faint, he led the
way

Where, cloistered round, the garden
lay ;

The pillared arches were over their
head,

And beneath their feet were the
bones of the dead.

VIII

Spreading herbs and flowerets
bright 80

Glistened with the dew of night ;
Nor herb nor floweret glistened
there

But was carved in the cloister.
arches as fair.

The monk gazed long on the lovely
moon,

Then into the night he looked
forth ;

And red and bright the streamers
light

Were dancing in the glowing
north.

So had he seen, in fair Castile,
The youth in glittering squad-
rons start,

Sudden the flying jennet wheel, 90
And hurl the unexpected dart.

He knew, by the streamers that
shot so bright,

That spirits were riding the north-
ern light.

IX

By a steel-clenched postern door
They entered now the chancel
tall ;

The darkened roof rose high
aloof

On pillars lofty and light and
small :

The keystone that locked each
ribbed aisle

Was a fleur-de-lys or a quatre-
feuille ;

The corbels were carved grotesque
and grim : 100

And the pillars, with clustered
shafts so trim,

With base and with capital flour-
ished around,

Seemed bundles of lances which
garlands had bound.

X

Full many a scutcheon and banner
 riven
 Shook to the cold night-wind of
 heaven,
 Around the screened altar's
 pale;
 And there the dying lamps did burn
 Before thy low and lonely urn,
 O gallant Chief of Otterburne!
 And thine, dark Knight of Lid-
 desdale! 110
 O fading honors of the dead!
 O high ambition lowly laid!

XI

The moon on the east oriel shone
 Through slender shafts of shapely
 stone,
 By foliated tracery combined;
 Thou wouldst have thought some
 fairy's hand
 'Twixt poplars straight the osier
 wand
 In many a freakish knot had
 twined,
 Then framed a spell when the work
 was done,
 And changed the willow wreaths
 to stone. 120
 The silver light, so pale and faint,
 Showed many a prophet and many
 a saint,
 Whose image on the glass was
 dyed;
 Full in the midst, his cross of red
 Triumphant Michael brandished,
 And trampled the Apostate's pride.
 The moonbeam kissed the holy
 pane,
 And threw on the pavement a
 bloody stain.

XII

They sate them down on a marble
 stone — 129
 A Scottish monarch slept below;
 Thus spoke the monk in solemn
 tone:
 'I was not always a man of woe;
 For Paynim countries I have trod,

And fought beneath the Cross of
 God:
 Now, strange to my eyes thine
 arms appear,
 And their iron clang sounds
 strange to my ear.

XIII

'In these far climes it was my
 lot
 To meet the wondrous Michael
 Scott;
 A wizard of such dreaded fame
 That when, in Salamanca's cave,
 Him listed his magic wand to
 wave, 141
 The bells would ring in Notre
 Dame!
 Some of his skill he taught to
 me;
 And, warrior, I could say to thee
 The words that cleft Eildon Hills
 in three,
 And bridled the Tweed with a
 curb of stone:
 But to speak them were a deadly
 sin,
 And for having but thought them
 my heart within
 A treble penance must be done.

XIV

'When Michael lay on his dying
 bed, 150
 His conscience was awakened;
 He bethought him of his sinful
 deed,
 And he gave me a sign to come
 with speed:
 I was in Spain when the morning
 rose,
 But I stood by his bed ere evening
 close.
 The words may not again be
 said
 That he spoke to me, on death-bed
 laid;
 They would rend this Abbaye's
 massy nave,
 And pile it in heaps above his
 grave. 159

XV

'I swore to bury his Mighty Book,
That never mortal might therein
look;
And never to tell where it was hid,
Save at his Chief of Branksome's
need;
And when that need was past and
o'er,
Again the volume to restore.
I buried him on Saint Michael's
night,
When the bell tolled one and the
moon was bright,
And I dug his chamber among the
dead,
When the floor of the chancel was
stained red,
That his patron's cross might over
him wave, 170
And scare the fiends from the
wizard's grave.

XVI

'It was a night of woe and dread
When Michael in the tomb I laid;
Strange sounds along the chancel
passed,
The banners waved without a
blast'—
Still spoke the monk, when the
bell tolled one!—
I tell you, that a braver man
Than William of Deloraine, good
at need,
Against a foe ne'er spurred a steed;
Yet somewhat was he chilled with
dread, 180
And his hair did bristle upon his
head.

XVII

'Lo, warrior! now, the cross of red
Points to the grave of the mighty
dead:
Within it burns a wondrous light,
To chase the spirits that love the
night;
That lamp shall burn unquench-
ably,
Until the eternal doom shall be.'

Slow moved the monk to the broad
flagstone
Which the bloody cross was traced
upon:
He pointed to a secret nook; 190
An iron bar the warrior took;
And the monk made a sign with
his withered hand,
The grave's huge portal to expand.

XVIII

With beating heart to the task he
went,
His sinewy frame o'er the grave-
stone bent,
With bar of iron heaved amain
Till the toil-drops fell from his
brows like rain.
It was by dint of passing strength
That he moved the massy stone at
length. 199
I would you had been there to see
How the light broke forth so glori-
ously,
Streamed upward to the chancel
roof,
And through the galleries far
aloof!
No earthly flame blazed e'er so
bright;
It shone like heaven's own blessed
light,
And, issuing from the tomb,
Showed the monk's cowl and vis-
age pale,
Danced on the dark-browed war-
rior's mail, 208
And kissed his waving plume.

XIX

Before their eyes the wizard lay,
As if he had not been dead a day.
His hoary beard in silver rolled,
He seemed some seventy winters
old;
A palmer's amice wrapped him
round,
With a wrought Spanish baldric
bound,
Like a pilgrim from beyond the
sea:

His left hand held his Book of
 Might,
 A silver cross was in his right ;
 The lamp was placed beside his
 knee. 219
 High and majestic was his look,
 At which the fellest fiends had
 shook,
 And all unruffled was his face :
 They trusted his soul had gotten
 grace.

XX

Often had William of Deloraine
 Rode through the battle's bloody
 plain,
 And trampled down the warriors
 slain,
 And neither known remorse nor
 awe,
 Yet now remorse and awe he
 owned ;
 His breath came thick, his head
 swam round,
 When this strange scene of death
 he saw. 230
 Bewildered and unnerved he stood,
 And the priest prayed fervently
 and loud :
 With eyes averted prayed he ;
 He might not endure the sight to
 see
 Of the man he had loved so bro-
 therly.

XXI

And when the priest his death-
 prayer had prayed,
 Thus unto Deloraine he said :
 ' Now, speed thee what thou hast
 to do,
 Or, warrior, we may dearly rue ;
 For those thou mayst not look
 upon 240
 Are gathering fast round the yawn-
 ing stone !'
 Then Deloraine in terror took
 From the cold hand the Mighty
 Book,
 With iron clasped and with iron
 bound :

He thought, as he took it, the
 dead man frowned ;
 But the glare of the sepulchral
 light
 Perchance had dazzled the war-
 rior's sight.

XXII

When the huge stone sunk o'er
 the tomb,
 The night returned in double
 gloom,
 For the moon had gone down
 and the stars were few ; 250
 And as the knight and priest
 withdrew,
 With wavering steps and dizzy
 brain,
 They hardly might the postern
 gain.
 'T is said, as through the aisles
 they passed,
 They heard strange noises on
 the blast ;
 And through the cloister-gal-
 leries small,
 Which at mid-height thread the
 chancel wall,
 Loud sobs, and laughter louder,
 ran,
 And voices unlike the voice of
 man,
 As if the fiends kept holiday 260
 Because these spells were
 brought to day.
 I cannot tell how the truth may
 be ;
 I say the tale as 't was said to me.

XXIII

' Now, hie thee hence,' the father
 said,
 ' And when we are on death-bed
 laid,
 O may our dear Ladye and sweet
 Saint John
 Forgive our souls for the deed we
 have done !'
 The monk returned him to his cell,
 And many a prayer and penance
 sped ;

When the convent met at the noon-
 tide bell, 270
 The Monk of Saint Mary's aisle
 was dead!
 Before the cross was the body
 laid,
 With hands clasped fast, as if still
 he prayed.

XXIV

The knight breathed free in the
 morning wind,
 And strove his hardihood to find:
 He was glad when he passed the
 tombstones gray
 Which girdle round the fair Ab-
 baye;
 For the mystic book, to his bosom
 pressed,
 Felt like a load upon his breast,
 And his joints, with nerves of iron
 twined, 280
 Shook like the aspen-leaves in
 wind.
 Full fain was he when the dawn of
 day
 Began to brighten Cheviot gray;
 He joyed to see the cheerful light,
 And he said Ave Mary as well as
 he might.

XXV

The sun had brightened Cheviot
 gray,
 The sun had brightened Carter's
 side;
 And soon beneath the rising day
 Smiled Branksome towers and
 Teviot's tide.
 The wild birds told their warbling
 tale, 290
 And wakened every flower that
 blows;
 And peeped forth the violet pale,
 And spread her breast the moun-
 tain rose.
 And lovelier than the rose so
 red,
 Yet paler than the violet pale,
 She early left her sleepless bed,
 The fairest maid of Teviotdale.

XXVI

Why does fair Margaret so early
 awake,
 And don her kirtle so hostile;
 And the silken knots, which in
 hurry she would make, 300
 Why tremble her slender fingers
 to tie?
 Why does she stop and look often
 around,
 As she glides down the secret
 stair;
 And why does she pat the shaggy
 bloodhound,
 As he rouses him up from his
 lair;
 And, though she passes the pos-
 tern alone,
 Why is not the watchman's bugle
 blown?

XXVII

The ladye steps in doubt and
 dread
 Lest her watchful mother hear her
 tread;
 The ladye caresses the rough
 bloodhound 310
 Lest his voice should waken the
 castle round;
 The watchman's bugle is not
 blown,
 For he was her foster-father's son;
 And she glides through the green-
 wood at dawn of light
 To meet Baron Henry, her own
 true knight.

XXVIII

The knight and ladye fair are met,
 And under the hawthorn's boughs
 are set.
 A fairer pair were never seen
 To meet beneath the hawthorn
 green.
 He was stately and young and
 tall, 320
 Dreaded in battle and loved in
 hall;
 And she, when love, scarce told,
 scarce hid,

Lent to her cheek a livelier red,
 When the half sigh her swelling
 breast
 Against the silken ribbon pressed,
 When her blue eyes their secret
 told,
 Though shaded by her locks of
 gold —
 Where would you find the peerless
 fair
 With Margaret of Branksome
 might compare !

XXIX

And now, fair dames, methinks I
 see 330
 You listen to my minstrelsy ;
 Your waving locks ye backward
 throw,
 And sidelong bend your necks of
 snow.
 Ye ween to hear a melting tale
 Of two true lovers in a dale ;
 And how the knight, with tender
 fire,
 To paint his faithful passion
 strove,
 Swore he might at her feet expire,
 But never, never cease to love ;
 And how she blushed, and how
 she sighed, 340
 And, half consenting, half de-
 nied,
 And said that she would die a
 maid ; —
 Yet, might the bloody feud be
 stayed,
 Henry of Cranstoun, and only
 he,
 Margaret of Branksome's choice
 should be.

XXX

Alas ! fair dames, your hopes are
 vain !
 My harp has lost the enchanting
 strain ;
 Its lightness would my age re-
 prove :
 My hairs are gray, my limbs are
 old,

My heart is dead, my veins are
 cold : 350
 I may not, must not, sing of love.

XXXI

Beneath an oak mossed o'er by eld
 The Baron's dwarf his courser
 held,
 And held his crested helm and
 spear :
 That dwarf was scarce an earthly
 man,
 If the tales were true that of him
 ran
 Through all the Border far and
 near.
 'T was said, when the Baron
 a-hunting rode
 Through Reedsdale's glens, but
 rarely trod,
 He heard a voice cry, ' Lost ! lost !
 lost ! ' 360
 And, like tennis-ball by racket
 tossed,
 A leap of thirty feet and three
 Made from the gorse this elfin
 shape,
 Distorted like some dwarfish ape,
 And lighted at Lord Cranstoun's
 knee.
 Lord Cranstoun was some whit
 dismayed ;
 'T is said that five good miles he
 rade,
 To rid him of his company ;
 But where he rode 'one mile, the
 dwarf ran four,
 And the dwarf was first at the
 castle door. 370

XXXII

Use lessens marvel, it is said :
 This elfish dwarf with the Baron
 staid ;
 Little he ate, and less he spoke,
 Nor mingled with the menial flock ;
 And oft apart his arms he tossed,
 And often muttered, ' Lost ! lost !
 lost ! ' 380
 He was waspish, arch, and lither-
 lie,

But well Lord Cranstoun served
 he :
 And he of his service was full fain ;
 For once he had been ta'en or
 slain, 380
 An it had not been for his minis-
 try.
 All between Home and Hermitage
 Talked of Lord Cranstoun's Gob-
 lin Page.

XXXIII

For the Baron went on pilgrimage,
 And took with him this elfish
 page,
 To Mary's Chapel of the Lowes ;
 For there, beside Our Ladye's
 lake,
 An offering he had sworn to make,
 And he would pay his vows.
 But the Ladye of Branksome gath-
 ered a band 390
 Of the best that would ride at her
 command ;
 The trysting-place was Newark
 Lee.
 Wat of Harden came thither
 amain,
 And thither came John of Thirle-
 stane,
 And thither came William of De-
 loraine ;
 They were three hundred spears
 and three.
 Through Douglas-burn, up Yarrow
 stream,
 Their horses prance, their lances
 gleam.
 They came to Saint Mary's lake
 ere day,
 But the chapel was void and the
 Baron away, 400
 They burned the chapel for very
 rage,
 And cursed Lord Cranstoun's Gob-
 lin Page.

XXXIV

And now, in Branksome's good
 greenwood,
 As under the aged oak he stood,

The Baron's courser pricks his
 ears,
 As if a distant noise he hears.
 The dwarf waves his long lean
 arm on high,
 And signs to the lovers to part and
 fly ;
 No time was then to vow or sigh.
 Fair Margaret through the hazel-
 grove 410
 Flew like the startled cushat-dove :
 The dwarf the stirrup held and
 rein ;
 Vaulted the knight on his steed
 amain,
 And, pondering deep that morn-
 ing's scene,
 Rode eastward through the haw-
 thorns green.

WHILE thus he poured the length-
 ened tale,
 The Minstrel's voice began to fail.
 Full slyly smiled the observant
 page,
 And gave the withered hand of age
 A goblet, crowned with mighty
 wine, 420
 The blood of Velez' scorched vine.
 He raised the silver cup on high,
 And, while the big drop filled his
 eye,
 Prayed God to bless the Duchess
 long,
 And all who cheered a son of song.
 The attending maidens smiled to
 see
 How long, how deep, how zeal-
 ously,
 The precious juice the Minstrel
 quaffed ;
 And he, emboldened by the
 draught,
 Looked gayly back to them and
 laughed. 430
 The cordial nectar of the bowl
 Swelled his old veins and cheered
 his soul ;
 A lighter, livelier prelude ran,
 Ere thus his tale again began.

CANTO THIRD

I

AND said I that my limbs were old,
 And said I that my blood was
 cold,
 And that my kindly fire was fled,
 And my poor withered heart was
 dead,

And that I might not sing of
 love?—
 How could I to the dearest theme
 That ever warmed a minstrel's
 dream,
 So foul, so false a recreant
 prove?
 How could I name love's very
 name,
 Nor wake my heart to notes of
 flame? 10

II

In peace, Love tunes the shep-
 herd's reed;
 In war, he mounts the warrior's
 steed;
 In halls, in gay attire is seen;
 In hamlets, dances on the green.
 Love rules the court, the camp,
 the grove,
 And men below, and saints above;
 For love is heaven, and heaven is
 love.

III

So thought Lord Cranstoun, as I
 ween,
 While, pondering deep the tender
 scene,
 He rode through Branksome's
 hawthorn green. 20
 But the page shouted wild and
 shrill,
 And scarce his helmet could he
 don,
 When downward from the shady
 hill
 A stately knight came pricking
 on.
 That warrior's steed, so dapple-
 gray,

Was dark with sweat and splashed
 with clay,

His armor red with many a
 stain:
 He seemed in such a weary plight,
 As if he had ridden the livelong
 night; 29
 For it was William of Deloraine.

IV

But no whit weary did he seem,
 When, dancing in the sunny beam,
 He marked the crane on the Bar-
 on's crest;
 For his ready spear was in his
 rest.
 Few were the words, and stern
 and high,
 That marked the foemen's feud-
 al hate;
 For question fierce and proud re-
 ply
 Gave signal soon of dire debate.
 Their very coursers seemed to
 know
 That each was other's mortal
 foe, 40
 And snorted fire when wheeled
 around
 To give each knight his vantage-
 ground.

V

In rapid round the Baron bent;
 He sighed a sigh and prayed a
 prayer;
 The prayer was to his patron
 saint,
 The sigh was to his ladye fair.
 Stout Deloraine nor sighed nor
 prayed,
 Nor saint nor ladye called to
 aid;
 But he stooped his head, and
 couched his spear,
 And spurred his steed to full ca-
 reer. 50
 The meeting of these champions
 proud
 Seemed like the bursting thunder-
 cloud.

VI

Stern was the dint the Borderer
lent!
The stately Baron backwards
bent,
Bent backwards to his horse's tail,
And his plumes went scattering
on the gale;
The tough ash spear, so stout and
true,
Into a thousand flinders flew.
But Cranstoun's lance, of more
avail,
Pierced through, like silk, the
Borderer's mail; 60
Through shield and jack and acton
passed,
Deep in his bosom broke at last.
Still sate the warrior saddle-fast,
Till, stumbling in the mortal shock,
Down went the steed, the girthing
broke,
Hurled on a heap lay man and
horse.
The Baron onward passed his
course,
Nor knew—so giddy rolled his
brain—
His foe lay stretched upon the
plain.

VII

But when he reined his courser
round, 70
And saw his foeman on the ground
Lie senseless as the bloody clay,
He bade his page to stanch the
wound,
And there beside the warrior
stay,
And tend him in his doubtful state,
And lead him to Branksome castle-
gate:
His noble mind was inly moved
For the kinsman of the maid he
loved.
'This shalt thou do without delay:
No longer here myself may stay;
Unless the swifter I speed away,
Short shrift will be at my dying
day.' 82

VIII

Away in speed Lord Cranstoun
rode;
The Goblin Page behind abode;
His lord's command he ne'er with-
stood,
Though small his pleasure to do
good.
As the corselet off he took,
The dwarf espied the Mighty
Book!
Much he marvelled a knight of
pride
Like a book-bosomed priest should
ride; 90
He thought not to search or stanch
the wound
Until the secret he had found.

IX

The iron band, the iron clasp,
Resisted long the elfin grasp;
For when the first he had undone,
It closed as he the next begun.
Those iron clasps, that iron band,
Would not yield to unchristened
hand
Till he smeared the cover o'er 99
With the Borderer's curdled gore;
A moment then the volume spread,
And one short spell therein he
read.
It had much of glamour might,
Could make a ladye seem a knight,
The cobwebs on a dungeon wall
Seem tapestry in lordly hall,
A nutshell seem a gilded barge,
A sheeling seem a palace large,
And youth seem age, and age
seem youth—
All was delusion, nought was
truth. 110

X

He had not read another spell,
When on his cheek a buffet fell,
So fierce, it stretched him on the
plain
Beside the wounded Deloraine.
From the ground he rose dismayed,
And shook his huge and matted
head;

One word he muttered and no more,
 'Man of age, thou smitest sore!'
 No more the elfin page durst try
 Into the wondrous book to pry;
 The clasps, though smeared with
 Christian gore, ¹²¹
 Shut faster than they were be-
 fore.

He hid it underneath his cloak. —
 Now, if you ask who gave the
 stroke,

I cannot tell, so mot I thrive;
 It was not given by man alive.

XI

Unwillingly himself he addressed
 To do his master's high behest:
 He lifted up the living corse, ¹²⁹
 And laid it on the weary horse;
 He led him into Branksome Hall
 Before the beards of the warders
 all,

And each did after swear and say
 There only passed a wain of hay.
 He took him to Lord David's
 tower,

Even to the Ladye's secret bow-
 er;

And, but that stronger spells were
 spread,

And the door might not be opened,
 He had laid him on her very bed.

Whate'er he did of gramarye ¹⁴⁰
 Was always done maliciously;
 He flung the warrior on the ground,
 And the blood welled freshly from
 the wound.

XII

As he repassed the outer court,
 He spied the fair young child at
 sport:

He thought to train him to the
 wood;

For, at a word, be it understood,
 He was always for ill, and never
 for good.

Seemed to the boy some comrade
 gay

Led him forth to the woods to
 play; ¹⁵⁰

On the drawbridge the warders
 stout
 Saw a terrier and lurcher passing
 out.

XIII

He led the boy o'er bank and fell,
 Until they came to a woodland
 brook;

The running stream dissolved the
 spell,

And his own elfish shape he took.
 Could he have had his pleasure
 vilde,

He had crippled the joints of the
 noble child,

Or, with his fingers long and lean,
 Had strangled him in fiendish
 spleen: ¹⁶⁰

But his awful mother he had in
 dread,

And also his power was limited;
 So he but scowled on the startled
 child,

And darted through the forest
 wild;

The woodland brook he bounding
 crossed,

And laughed, and shouted, 'Lost!
 lost! lost!'

XIV

Full sore amazed at the wondrous
 change,

And frightened, as a child might
 be,

At the wild yell and visage strange,
 And the dark words of gram-
 arye, ¹⁷⁰

The child, amidst the forest bower,
 Stood rooted like a lily flower;

And when at length, with trem-
 bling pace,

He sought to find where Brank-
 some lay,

He feared to see that grisly face
 Glare from some thicket on his
 way.

Thus, starting oft, he journeyed
 on,

And deeper in the wood is gone, —

For aye the more he sought his
way,
The farther still he went astray,
Until he heard the mountains
round 181
Ring to the baying of a hound.

XV

And hark! and hark! the deep-
mouthed bark
Comes nigher still and nigher;
Bursts on the path a dark blood-
hound,
His tawny muzzle tracked the
ground,
And his red eye shot fire.
Soon as the wildered child saw
he,

He flew at him right furiously.
I ween you would have seen with
joy 190

The bearing of the gallant boy,
When, worthy of his noble sire,
His wet cheek glowed 'twixt fear
and ire!

He faced the bloodhound man-
fully,

And held his little bat on high;
So fierce he struck, the dog, afraid,
At cautious distance hoarsely
bayed,

But still in act to spring;
When dashed an archer through
the glade,

And when he saw the hound was
stayed, 200

He drew his tough bowstring;
But a rough voice cried, 'Shoot
not, hoy!

Ho! shoot not, Edward, — 't is a
boy!'

XVI

The speaker issued from the
wood,

And checked his fellow's surly
mood,

And quelled the bandog's ire:
He was an English yeoman good
And born in Lancashire.

Well could he hit a fallow-deer
Five hundred feet him fro; 210
With hand more true and eye more
clear

No archer bended bow.
His coal-black hair, shorn round
and close,

Set off his sun-burned face;
Old England's sign, Saint George's
cross,

His barret-cap did grace;
His bugle-horn hung by his side,
All in a wolf-skin baldric tied;
And his short falchion, sharp and
clear,

Had pierced the throat of many a
deer. 220

XVII

His kirtle, made of forest green,
Reached scantily to his knee:
And, at his belt, of arrows keen
A furbished sheaf bore he;
His buckler scarce in breadth a
span,

No longer fence had he;
He never counted him a man,
Would strike below the knee;
His slackened bow was in his
hand,

And the leash that was his blood-
hound's band. 230

XVIII

He would not do the fair child
harm,

But held him with his powerful
arm,

That he might neither fight nor
flee;

For when the red cross spied
he,

The boy strove long and violent-
ly.

'Now, by Saint George,' the archer
cries,

'Edward, methinks we have a
prize!

This boy's fair face and courage
free

Show he is come of high degree.'

XIX

'Yes! I am come of high degree,
 For I am the heir of bold Bucleuch;
 And, if thou dost not set me free,
 False Southron, thou shalt dearly rue!
 For Walter of Harden shall come with speed,
 And William of Deloraine, good at need,
 And every Scott from Esk to Tweed;
 And, if thou dost not let me go,
 Despite thy arrows and thy bow,
 I'll have thee hanged to feed the crow!'

XX

'Gramercy for thy good-will, fair boy!
 My mind was never set so high;
 But if thou art chief of such a clan,
 And art the son of such a man,
 And ever comest to thy command,
 Our wardens had need to keep good order:
 My bow of yew to a hazel wand,
 Thou'lt make them work upon the Border!
 Meantime, be pleased to come with me,
 For good Lord Dacre shalt thou see;
 I think our work is well begun,
 When we have taken thy father's son.

XXI

Although the child was led away,
 In Branksome still he seemed to stay,
 For so the Dwarf his part did play;
 And, in the shape of that young boy,
 He wrought the castle much annoy.
 The comrades of the young Bucleuch

He pinched and beat and overthrew;
 Nay, some of them he well-nigh slew.
 He tore Dame Maudlin's silken tire,
 And, as Sym Hall stood by the fire,
 He lighted the match of his bandelier,
 And wofully scorched the hackbuteer.
 It may be hardly thought or said,
 The mischief that the urchin made,
 Till many of the castle guessed
 That the young baron was possessed!

XXII

Well I ween the charm he held
 The noble Ladye had soon dispelled,
 But she was deeply busied then
 To tend the wounded Deloraine.
 Much she wondered to find him lie
 On the stone threshold stretched along:
 She thought some spirit of the sky
 Had done the bold moss-trooper wrong,
 Because, despite her precept dread,
 Perchance he in the book had read;
 But the broken lance in his bosom stood,
 And it was earthly steel and wood.

XXIII

She drew the splinter from the wound,
 And with a charm she stanch'd the blood.
 She bade the gash be cleansed and bound:
 No longer by his couch she stood;
 But she has ta'en the broken lance
 And washed it from the clotted gore,
 And salv'd the splinter o'er and o'er.

William of Deloraine, in trance,
Whene'er she turned it round and
round,

Twisted as if she galled his wound.
Then to her maidens she did
say, 300

That he should be whole man and
sound

Within the course of a night and
day.

Full long she toiled, for she did rue
Mishap to friend so stout and true.

XXIV

So passed the day — the evening
fell,

'T was near the time of curfew
bell;

The air was mild, the wind was
calm,

The stream was smooth, the dew
was balm;

E'en the rude watchman on the
tower

Enjoyed and blessed the lovely
hour. 310

Far more fair Margaret loved and
blessed

The hour of silence and of rest.

On the high turret sitting lone,
She waked at times the lute's soft
tone,

Touched a wild note, and all be-
tween

Thought of the bower of haw-
thorns green.

Her golden hair streamed free
from band,

Her fair cheek rested on her hand,
Her blue eyes sought the west
afar,

For lovers love the western
star. 320

XXV

Is yon the star, o'er Penchryst Pen,
That rises slowly to her ken,

And, spreading broad its waver-
ing light,

Shakes its loose tresses on the
night?

Is yon red glare the western star? —
O, 't is the beacon-blaze of war!

Scarce could she draw her tight-
ened breath,

For well she knew the fire of
death!

XXVI

The warder viewed it blazing
strong,

And blew his war-note loud and
long, 330

Till at the high and haughty sound,
Rock, wood, and river rung around.

The blast alarmed the festal hall,
And startled forth the warriors all;

Far downward in the castle-yard
Full many a torch and cresset

glared;

And helms and plumes, confusedly
tossed,

Were in the blaze half seen, half
lost;

And spears in wild disorder shook,
Like reeds beside a frozen
brook. 340

XXVII

The seneschal, whose silver hair
Was reddened by the torches'
glare,

Stood in the midst, with gesture
proud,

And issued forth his mandates
loud:

'On Penchryst glows a bale of fire,
And three are kindling on Priest-
haughswire;

Ride out, ride out,

The foe to scout!

Mount, mount for Branksome,
every man!

Thou, Todrig, warn the Johnstone
clan, 350

That ever are true and stout.

Ye need not send to Liddesdale,
For when they see the blazing bale

Elliot's and Armstrongs never
fail. —

Ride, Alton, ride, for death and
life,

And warn the warden of the
strife! —
Young Gilbert, let our beacon
blaze,
Our kin and clan and friends to
raise!'

XXVIII

Fair Margaret from the turret
head
Heard far below the coursers'
tread, ³⁶⁰
While loud the harness rung,
As to their seats with clamor
dread
The ready horsemen sprung :
And trampling hoofs, and iron
coats,
And leaders' voices, mingled notes,
And out! and out!
In hasty rout,
The horsemen galloped forth;
Dispersing to the south to scout,
And east, and west, and north, ³⁷⁰
To view their coming enemies,
And warn their vassals and allies.

XXIX

The ready page with hurried hand
Awaked the need-fire's slumbering
brand,
And ruddy blushed the heaven;
For a sheet of flame from the tur-
ret high
Waved like a blood-flag on the sky,
All flaring and uneven.
And soon a score of fires, I ween,
From height and hill and cliff were
seen, ³⁸⁰
Each with warlike tidings fraught;
Each from each the signal caught;
Each after each they glanced to
sight,
As stars arise upon the night.
They gleamed on many a dusky
tarn,
Haunted by the lonely earn;
On many a cairn's gray pyramid,
Where urns of mighty chiefs lie
hid;
Till high Dunedin the blazes saw

From Soltra and Dumpender Law,
And Lothian heard the Regent's
order ³⁹¹
That all should bowne them for
the Border.

XXX

The livelong night in Branksome
rang
The ceaseless sound of steel;
The castle-bell with backward
clang
Sent forth the larum peal.
Was frequent heard the heavy jar,
Where massy stone and iron bar
Were piled on echoing keep and
tower,
To whelm the foe with deadly
shower; ⁴⁰⁰
Was frequent heard the changing
guard,
And watchword from the sleepless
ward;
While, wearied by the endless din,
Bloodhound and ban-dog yelled
within.

XXXI

The noble dame, amid the broil,
Shared the gray seneschal's high
toil,
And spoke of danger with a smile,
Cheered the young knights, and
council sage
Held with the chiefs of riper age.
No tidings of the foe were brought,
Nor of his numbers knew they
aught, ⁴¹¹
Nor what in time of truce he
sought.
Some said that there were thou-
sands ten;
And others weened that it was
nought
But Leven Clans or Tynedale
men,
Who came to gather in black-
mail;
And Liddesdale, with small avail,
Might drive them lightly back
agen.

So passed the anxious night away,
And welcome was the peep of day.

CEASED the high sound — the
listening throng ⁴²¹

Applaud the Master of the Song;
And marvel much, in helpless age,
So hard should be his pilgrimage.
Had he no friend — no daughter
dear,

His wandering toil to share and
cheer?

No son to be his father's stay,
And guide him on the rugged way?
'Ay, once he had — but he was
dead!' —

Upon the harp he stooped his
head, ⁴³⁰

And busied himself the strings
withal,

To hide the tear that fain would
fall.

In solemn measure, soft and slow,
Arose a father's notes of woe.

CANTO FOURTH

I

SWEET Teviot! on thy silver tide
The glaring bale-fires blaze no
more;

No longer steel-clad warriors ride
Along thy wild and willowed
shore;

Where'er thou wind'st by dale or
hill,

All, all is peaceful, all is still,
As if thy waves, since time was
born,

Since first they rolled upon the
Tweed,

Had only heard the shepherd's
reed, ⁹

Nor startled at the bugle-horn.

II

Unlike the tide of human time,
Which, though it change in
ceaseless flow,

Retains each grief, retains each
crime,

Its earliest course was doomed
to know,

And, darker as it downward bears,
Is stained with past and present
tears.

Low as that tide has ebbd with
me,

It still reflects to memory's eye
The hour my brave, my only boy

Fell by the side of great Dun-
dee. ²⁰

Why, when the volleying musket
played

Against the bloody Highland
blade,

Why was not I beside him laid? —
Enough — he died the death of
fame;

Enough — he died with conquer-
ing Græme.

III

Now over Border dale and fell

Full wide and far was terror
spread;

For pathless marsh and mountain
cell

The peasant left his lowly shed.
The frightened flocks and herds

were pent ³⁰

Beneath the peel's rude battle-
ment;

And maids and matrons dropped
the tear,

While ready warriors seized the
spear.

From Branksome's towers the
watchman's eye

Dun wreaths of distant smoke can
spy,

Which, curling in the rising sun,
Showed Southern ravage was be-
gun.

IV

Now loud the heedful gate-ward
cried:

'Prepare ye all for blows and
blood!

Watt Tinlinn, from the Liddel-
 side, ⁴⁰
 Comes wading through the flood.
 Full oft the Tynedale snatchers
 knock
 At his lone gate and prove the
 lock;
 It was but last Saint Barnabright
 They sieged him a whole summer
 night,
 But fled at morning; well they
 knew,
 In vain he never twanged the
 yew.
 Right sharp has been the evening
 shower
 That drove him from his Liddel
 tower;
 And, by my faith,' the gate-ward
 said, ⁵⁰
 'I think 't will prove a Warden-
 Raid.'

V

While thus he spoke, the bold yeo-
 man
 Entered the echoing barbican.
 He led a small and shaggy nag,
 That through a bog, from hag to
 hag,
 Could bound like any Billhope
 stag.
 It bore his wife and children
 twain;
 A half-clothed serf was all their
 train:
 His wife, stout, ruddy, and dark-
 browed,
 Of silver brooch and bracelet
 proud, ⁶⁰
 Laughed to her friends among the
 crowd.
 He was of stature passing tall,
 But sparely formed and lean
 withal:
 A battered morion on his brow;
 A leathern jack, as fence enow,
 On his broad shoulders loosely
 hung;
 A Border axe behind was slung;
 His spear, six Scottish ells in
 length,

Seemed newly dyed with gore;
 His shafts and bow, of wondrous
 strength, ⁷⁰
 His hardy partner bore.

VI

Thus to the Ladye did Tinlinn
 show
 The tidings of the English foe:
 'Belted Will Howard is marching
 here,
 And hot Lord Dacre, with many a
 spear,
 And all the German hackbut-men
 Who have long lain at Askerten.
 They crossed the Liddel at curfew
 hour,
 And burned my little lonely
 tower—
 The fiend receive their souls
 therefor! ⁸⁰
 It had not been burnt this year
 and more.
 Barnyard and dwelling, blazing
 bright,
 Served to guide me on my flight,
 But I was chased the livelong
 night.
 Black John of Akeshaw and Fer-
 gus Græme
 Fast upon my traces came,
 Until I turned at Priestthaugh
 Scrogg,
 And shot their horses in the bog,
 Slew Fergus with my lance out-
 right—
 I had him long at high despite; ⁹⁰
 He drove my cows last Fastern's
 night.'

VII

Now weary scouts from Liddes-
 dale,
 Fast hurrying in, confirmed the
 tale;
 As far as they could judge by ken,
 Three hours would bring to
 Teviot's strand
 Three thousand armed English-
 men.
 Meanwhile, full many a warlike
 band,

From Teviot, Aill, and Ettrick
 shade,
 Came in, their chief's defence to
 aid.
 There was saddling and mounting
 in haste, 100
 There was pricking o'er moor
 and lea;
 He that was last at the trysting-
 place
 Was but lightly held of his gay
 ladye.

VIII

From fair Saint Mary's silver wave,
 From dreary Gamescleuch's
 dusky height,
 His ready lances Thirlestane
 brave
 Arrayed beneath a banner
 bright.
 The treasured fleur-de-luce he
 claims
 To wreath his shield, since royal
 James,
 Encamped by Fala's mossy
 wave, 110
 The proud distinction grateful
 gave
 For faith mid feudal jars;
 What time, save Thirlestane alone,
 Of Scotland's stubborn barons
 none
 Would march to southern wars;
 And hence, in fair remembrance
 worn,
 Yon sheaf of spears his crest has
 borne;
 Hence his high motto shines re-
 vealed,
 'Ready, aye ready,' for the field.

IX

An aged knight, to danger
 steeled, 120
 With many a moss-trooper, came
 on;
 And, azure in a golden field,
 The stars and crescent graced his
 shield,
 Without the bend of Murdieston.

Wide lay his lands round Oak-
 wood Tower,
 And wide round haunted Castle-
 Ower;
 High over Borthwick's mountain
 flood
 His wood-embosomed mansion
 stood;
 In the dark glen, so deep below,
 The herds of plundered England
 low, 130
 His bold retainers' daily food,
 And bought with danger, blows,
 and blood.
 Marauding chief! his sole delight
 The moonlight raid, the morning
 fight;
 Not even the Flower of Yarrow's
 charms
 In youth might tame his rage for
 arms;
 And still in age he spurned at
 rest,
 And still his brows the helmet
 pressed,
 Albeit the blanched locks below
 Were white as Dinlay's spotless
 snow. 140
 Five stately warriors drew the
 sword
 Before their father's band;
 A braver knight than Harden's
 lord
 Ne'er belted on a brand.

X

Scotts of Eskdale, a stalwart band,
 Came trooping down the Tod-
 shawhill;
 By the sword they won their land,
 And by the sword they hold it
 still.
 Hearken, Ladye, to the tale
 How thy sires won fair Esk-
 dale. 150
 Earl Morton was lord of that val-
 ley fair,
 The Beattisons were his vassals
 there.
 The earl was gentle and mild of
 mood,

The vassals were warlike and
fierce and rude;
High of heart and haughty of
word,
Little they recked of a tame liege-
lord.
The earl into fair Eskdale came,
Homage and seigniorship to claim:
Of Gilbert the Galliard a heriot he
sought,
Saying, 'Give thy best steed, as a
vassal ought.' 160
'Dear to me is my bonny white
steed,
Oft has he helped me at pinch of
need;
Lord and earl though thou be, I
trow,
I can rein Bucksfoot better than
thou.'
Word on word gave fuel to fire,
Till so high blazed the Beattison's
ire,
But that the earl the flight had
ta'en,
The vassals there their lord had
slain.
Sore he plied both whip and
spur,
As he urged his steed through
Eskdale muir; 170
And it fell down a weary weight,
Just on the threshold of Brank-
some gate.

XI

The earl was a wrathful man to
see,
Full fain avenged would he be.
In haste to Branksome's lord he
spoke,
Saying, 'Take these traitors to
thy yoke;
For a cast of hawks, and a purse
of gold,
All Eskdale I'll sell thee, to have
and hold:
Beshrew thy heart, of the Beatti-
sons' clan
If thou leavest on Eske a landed
man! 180

But spare Woodkerrick's lands
alone,
For he lent me his horse to escape
upon.'
A glad man then was Branksome
bold,
Down he flung him the purse of
gold;
To Eskdale soon he spurred
amain,
And with him five hundred riders
has ta'en.
He left his merry men in the midst
of the hill,
And bade them hold them close
and still;
And alone he wended to the plain,
To meet with the Galliard and all
his train. 190
To Gilbert the Galliard thus he
said:
'Know thou me for thy liege-lord
and head;
Deal not with me as with Morton
tame,
For Scotts play best at the rough-
est game.
Give me in peace my heriot due,
Thy bonny white steed, or thou
shalt rue.
If my horn I three times wind,
Eskdale shall long have the sound
in mind.'

XII

Loudly the Beattison laughed in
scorn;
'Little care we for thy winded
horn. 200
Ne'er shall it be the Galliard's
lot
To yield his steed to a haughty
Scott.
Wend thou to Branksome back on
foot,
With rusty spur and miry boot.'
He blew his bugle so loud and
hoarse
That the dun deer started at far
Craikcross;
He blew again so loud and clear,

Through the gray mountain-mist
 there did lances appear;
 And the third blast rang with such
 a din
 That the echoes answered from
 Pentounlinn, 210
 And all his riders came lightly
 in.
 Then had you seen a gallant shock,
 When saddles were emptied and
 lances broke!
 For each scornful word the Gal-
 liard had said
 A Beattison on the field was laid.
 His own good sword the chieftain
 drew,
 And he bore the Galliard through
 and through;
 Where the Beattisons' blood mixed
 with the rill,
 The Galliard's Haugh men call it
 still.
 The Scotts have scattered the
 Beattison clan, 220
 In Eskdale they left but one
 landed man.
 The valley of Eske, from the
 mouth to the source,
 Was lost and won for that bonny
 white horse.

XIII

Whitslade the Hawk, and Head-
 shaw came,
 And warriors more than I may
 name;
 From Yarrow-cleugh to Hind-
 haugh-swair,
 From Woodhouseslie to Chester-
 glen,
 Trooped man and horse, and bow
 and spear;
 Their gathering word was Bel-
 lenden.
 And better hearts o'er Border
 sod 230
 To siege or rescue never rode.
 The Ladye marked the aids come
 in,
 And high her heart of pride
 arose;

She bade her youthful son attend,
 That he might know his father's
 friend,

And learn to face his foes:
 'The boy is ripe to look on war;
 I saw him draw a cross-bow stiff,
 And his true arrow struck afar
 The raven's nest upon the
 cliff; 240
 The red cross on a Southern
 breast
 Is broader than the raven's nest:
 Thou, Whitslade, shalt teach him
 his weapon to wield,
 And o'er him hold his father's
 shield.'

XIV

Well may you think the wily page
 Cared not to face the Ladye sage.
 He counterfeited childish fear,
 And shrieked, and shed full many
 a tear,
 And moaned, and plained in man-
 ner wild.
 The attendants to the Ladye
 told, 250
 Some fairy, sure, had changed the
 child,

That wont to be so free and bold.
 Then wrathful was the noble
 dame;
 She blushed blood-red for very
 shame:
 'Hence! ere the clan his faintness
 view;
 Hence with the weakling to Buc-
 cleuch!—
 Watt Tinlinn, thou shalt be his
 guide
 To Rangleburn's lonely side.—
 Sure, some fell fiend has cursed
 our line,
 That coward should e'er be son of
 mine!' 260

XV

A heavy task Watt Tinlinn had,
 To guide the counterfeited lad.
 Soon as the palfrey felt the weight
 Of that ill-omened elfish freight,

He bolted, sprung, and reared
 amain,
 Nor heeded bit nor curb nor rein.
 It cost Watt Tinlinn mickle toil
 To drive him but a Scottish mile;
 But as a shallow brook they
 crossed,
 The elf, amid the running
 stream, 270
 His figure changed, like form in
 dream,
 And fled, and shouted, 'Lost!
 lost! lost!'
 Full fast the urchin ran and
 laughed,
 But faster still a cloth-yard shaft
 Whistled from startled Tinlinn's
 yew,
 And pierced his shoulder through
 and through.
 Although the imp might not be
 slain,
 And though the wound soon healed
 again,
 Yet, as he ran, he yelled for pain;
 And Watt of Tinlinn, much
 aghast, 280
 Rode back to Branksome fiery
 fast.

XVI

Soon on the hill's steep verge he
 stood,
 That looks o'er Branksome's
 towers and wood;
 And martial murmurs from below
 Proclaimed the approaching
 Southern foe.
 Through the dark wood, in min-
 gled tone,
 Were Border pipes and bugles
 blown;
 The coursers' neighing he could
 ken,
 A measured tread of marching
 men;
 While broke at times the solemn
 hum, 290
 The Almayn's sullen kettle-drum;
 And banners tall, of crimson sheen,
 Above the copse appear;

And, glistening through the haw-
 thorns green,
 Shine helm and shield and spear.

XVII

Light forayers first, to view the
 ground,
 Spurred their fleet coursers loosely
 round;
 Behind, in close array, and fast,
 The Kendal archers, all in green,
 Obedient to the bugle blast, 300
 Advancing from the wood were
 seen.
 To back and guard the archer
 band,
 Lord Dacre's billmen were at
 hand:
 A hardy race, on Irthing bred,
 With kirtles white and crosses
 red,
 Arrayed beneath the banner tall
 That streamed o'er Acre's con-
 quered wall;
 And minstrels, as they marched
 in order,
 Played, 'Noble Lord Dacre, he
 dwells on the Border.'

XVIII

Behind the English bill and bow 310
 The mercenaries, firm and slow,
 Moved on to fight in dark array.
 By Conrad led of Wolfenstein,
 Who brought the band from dis-
 tant Rhine,
 And sold their blood for foreign
 pay.
 The camp their home, their law the
 sword,
 They knew no country, owned no
 lord:
 They were not armed like Eng-
 land's sons,
 But bore the levin-darting guns;
 Buff coats, all frounced and broi-
 dered o'er, 320
 And morsing-horns and scarfs
 they wore;
 Each better knee was bared, to aid
 The warriors in the escalade;

All as they marched, in rugged
tongue
Songs of Teutonic feuds they sung.

XIX

But louder still the clamor grew,
And louder still the minstrels blew,
When, from beneath the green-
wood tree,
Rode forth Lord Howard's chiv-
alry;
His men-at-arms, with glaive and
spear, 330
Brought up the battle's glittering
rear.
There many a youthful knight,
full keen
To gain his spurs, in arms was
seen,
With favor in his crest or glove,
Memorial of his ladye-love.
So rode they forth in fair array,
Till full their lengthened lines dis-
play;
Then called a halt, and made a
stand,
And cried, 'Saint George for
merry England!'

XX

Now every English eye intent 340
On Branksome's armed towers
was bent;
So near they were that they might
know
The straining harsh of each cross-
bow;
On battlement and bartizan
Gleamed axe and spear and parti-
san;
Falcon and culver on each tower
Stood prompt their deadly hail to
shower;
And flashing armor frequent broke
From eddying whirls of sable
smoke,
Where upon tower and turret
head 350
The seething pitch and molten lead
Reeked like a witch's caldron
red.

While yet they gaze, the bridges
fall,
The wicket opes, and from the
wall
Rides forth the hoary seneschal.

XXI

Armed he rode, all save the head,
His white beard o'er his breast-
plate spread;
Unbroke by age, erect his seat,
He ruled his eager courser's
gait,
Forced him with chastened fire
to prance, 360
And, high curvetting, slow ad-
vance:
In sign of truce, his better hand
Displayed a peeled willow wand;
His squire, attending in the rear,
Bore high a gauntlet on a spear.
When they espied him riding
out,
Lord Howard and Lord Dacre
stout
Sped to the front of their array,
To hear what this old knight
should say.

XXII

'Ye English warden lords, of
you 370
Demands the Ladye of Buccleuch,
Why, 'gainst the truce of Border
tide,
In hostile guise ye dare to ride,
With Kendal bow and Gilsland
brand,
And all yon mercenary band,
Upon the bounds of fair Scotland?
My Ladye reads you swith re-
turn;
And, if but one poor straw you
burn,
Or do our towers so much molest
As scare one swallow from her
nest, 380
Saint Mary! but we'll light a
brand
Shall warm your hearths in Cum-
berland.'—

XXIII

A wrathful man was Dacre's lord,
But calmer Howard took the
word:

'May 't please thy dame, Sir Sen-
eschal,

To seek the castle's outward wall,
Our pursuivant-at-arms shall show
Both why we came and when we
go.'

The message sped, the noble dame
To the wall's outward circle
came; 390

Each chief around leaned on his
spear,

To see the pursuivant appear.

All in Lord Howard's livery
dressed,

The lion argent decked his breast;
He led a boy of blooming hue —

O sight to meet a mother's view!
It was the heir of great Buccleuch.

Obeisance meet the herald made,
And thus his master's will he
said:

XXIV

'It irks, high dame, my noble
lords, 400

'Gainst ladye fair to draw their
swords;

But yet they may not tamely see,
All through the Western War-
denry,

Your law - contemning kinsmen
ride,

And burn and spoil the Border-
side;

And ill beseems your rank and
birth

To make your towers a flemens-
firth.

We claim from thee William of
Deloraine,

That he may suffer march-treason
pain.

It was but last Saint Cuthbert's
even 410

He picked to Stapleton on Leven,
Harried the lands of Richard Mus-
grave,

And slew his brother by dint of
glaive.

Then, since a lone and widowed
dame

These restless riders may not
tame,

Either receive within thy towers
Two hundred of my master's
powers,

Or straight they sound their war-
rison,

And storm and spoil thy garrison;
And this fair boy, to London
led, 420

Shall good King Edward's page
be bred.'

XXV

He ceased — and loud the boy did
cry,

And stretched his little arms on
high,

Implored for aid each well-known
face,

And strove to seek the dame's em-
brace.

A moment changed that Ladye's
cheer,

Gushed to her eye the unbidden
tear;

She gazed upon the leaders round,
And dark and sad each warrior
frowned;

Then deep within her sobbing
breast 430

She locked the struggling sigh to
rest,

Unaltered and collected stood,
And thus replied in dauntless
mood:

XXVI

'Say to your lords of high emprise
Who war on women and on
boys,

That either William of Deloraine
Will cleanse him by oath of march-
treason stain,

Or else he will the combat take
'Gainst Musgrave for his honor's
sake,

No knight in Cumberland so
 good 440
 But William may count with him
 kin and blood.
 Knighthood he took of Douglas'
 sword,
 When English blood swelled An-
 cram ford;
 And but Lord Dacre's steed was
 wight,
 And bare him ably in the flight,
 Himself had seen him dubbed a
 knight.
 For the young heir of Branksome's
 line,
 God be his aid, and God be mine!
 Through me no friend shall meet
 his doom;
 Here, while I live, no foe finds
 room. 450
 Then, if thy lords their purpose
 urge,
 Take our defiance loud and high;
 Our slogan is their lyke-wake
 dirge,
 Our moat the grave where they
 shall lie.'

XXVII

Proud she looked round, applause
 to claim—
 Then lightened Thirlestane's eye
 of flame;
 His bugle Wat of Harden blew:
 Pensils and pennons wide were
 flung,
 To heaven the Border slogan rung,
 'Saint Mary for the young Buc-
 cleuch!' 460
 The English war-cry answered
 wide,
 And forward bent each Southern
 spear;
 Each Kendal archer made a stride,
 And drew the bowstring to his
 ear;
 Each minstrel's war-note loud was
 blown;—
 But, ere a gray-goose shaft had
 flown,
 A horseman galloped from the
 rear.

XXVIII

'Ah! noble lords!' he breathless
 said,
 'What treason has your march
 betrayed?
 What make you here from aid so
 far, 470
 Before you walls, around you war?
 Your foemen triumph in the
 thought
 That in the toils the lion's caught.
 Already on dark Ruberslaw
 The Douglas holds his weapon-
 schaw;
 The lances, waving in his train,
 Clothe the dun heath like autumn
 grain;
 And on the Liddel's northern
 strand,
 To bar retreat to Cumberland,
 Lord Maxwell ranks his merry-men
 good 480
 Beneath the eagle and the rood;
 And Jedwood, Eske, and Teviot-
 dale,
 Have to proud Angus come;
 And all the Merse and Lauderdale
 Have risen with haughty Home.
 An exile from Northumberland,
 In Liddesdale I've wandered
 long,
 But still my heart was with merry
 England,
 And cannot brook my country's
 wrong;
 And hard I've spurred all night,
 to show 490
 The mustering of the coming foe.'

XXIX

'And let them come!' fierce Dacre
 cried;
 'For soon yon crest, my father's
 pride,
 That swept the shores of Judah's
 sea,
 And waved in gales of Galilee,
 From Branksome's highest towers
 displayed,
 Shall mock the rescue's lingering
 aid!—
 Level each harquebuss on row;

Draw, merry archers, draw the
bow; 499
Up, billmen, to the walls, and cry,
Dacre for England, win or die! —

XXX

'Yet hear,' quoth Howard, 'calmly
hear,
Nor deem my words the words of
fear:
For who, in field or foray slack,
Saw the Blanche Lion e'er fall
back?
But thus to risk our Border flower
In strife against a kingdom's
power,
Ten thousand Scots 'gainst thou-
sands three,
Certes, were desperate policy.
Nay, take the terms the Ladye
made 510
Ere conscious of the advancing
aid:

Let Musgrave meet fierce Delo-
raine
In single fight, and if he gain,
He gains for us; but if he's crossed,
'T is but a single warrior lost:
The rest, retreating as they came,
Avoid defeat and death and shame.'

XXXI

Ill could the haughty Dacre brook
His brother warden's sage rebuke;
And yet his forward step he stayed,
And slow and sullenly obeyed. 521
But ne'er again the Border side
Did these two lords in friendship
ride;
And this slight discontent, men
say,
Cost blood upon another day.

XXXII

The pursuivant-at-arms again
Before the castle took his stand;
His trumpet called with parleying
strain

The leaders of the Scottish band;
And he defied, in Musgrave's right,
Stout Deloraine to single fight. 531

A gauntlet at their feet he laid,
And thus the terms of fight he
said:

'If in the lists good Musgrave's
sword

Vanquish the Knight of Delo-
raine,

Your youthful chieftain, Brank-
some's lord,

Shall hostage for his clan re-
main;

If Deloraine foil good Musgrave,
The boy his liberty shall have.

Howe'er it falls, the English
band, 540

Unharming Scots, by Scots un-
harm'd,

In peaceful march, like men un-
arm'd,

Shall straight retreat to Cumber-
land.'

XXXIII

Unconscious of the near relief,
The proffer pleased each Scottish
chief,

Though much the Ladye sage
gainsaid;

For though their hearts were brave
and true,

From Jedwood's recent sack they
knew

How tardy was the Regent's aid:
And you may guess the noble
dame 550

Durst not the secret prescience
own,

Sprung from the art she might not
name,

By which the coming help was
known.

Closed was the compact, and agreed
That lists should be enclosed with
speed

Beneath the castle on a lawn:

They fixed the morrow for the
strife,

On foot, with Scottish axe and
knife,

At the fourth hour from peep of
dawn;

When Deloraine, from sickness
freed, 560
Or else a champion in his stead,
Should for himself and chieftain
stand
Against stout Musgrave, hand to
hand.

XXXIV

I know right well that in their lay
Full many minstrels sing and say
Such combat should be made on
horse

On foaming steed, in full career,
With brand to aid, whenas the
spear

Should shiver in the course: 569
But he, the jovial harper, taught
Me, yet a youth, how it was fought,
In guise which now I say;
He knew each ordinance and clause
Of Black Lord Archibald's battle-
laws,

In the old Douglas' day.
He brooked not, he, that scoffing
tongue

Should tax his minstrelsy with
wrong,

Or call his song untrue:
For this, when they the goblet
plied,

And such rude taunt had chafed
his pride, 580

The Bard of Reull he slew.
On Teviot's side in fight they stood,
And tuneful hands were stained
with blood,

Where still the thorn's white
branches wave,
Memorial o'er his rival's grave.

XXXV

Why should I tell the rigid doom
That dragged my master to his
tomb;

How Ousenam's maidens tore
their hair,

Wept till their eyes were dead and
dim,

And wrung their hands for love of
him 590

Who died at Jedwood Air?
He died!—his scholars, one by one,
To the cold silent grave are gone;
And I, alas! survive alone,
To muse o'er rivalries of yore,
And grieve that I shall hear no
more
The strains, with envy heard be-
fore;
For, with my minstrel brethren
fled,
My jealousy of song is dead.

HE paused: the listening dames
again 600

Applaud the hoary Minstrel's
strain.

With many a word of kindly
cheer,—

In pity half, and half sincere,—
Marvelled the Duchess how so well
His legendary song could tell

Of ancient deeds, so long forgot;
Of feuds, whose memory was not;
Of forests, now laid waste and
bare;

Of towers, which harbor now the
hare;

Of manners, long since changed
and gone; 610

Of chiefs, who under their gray
stone

So long had slept that fickle Fame
Had blotted from her rolls their
name,

And twined round some new min-
ion's head

The fading wreath for which they
bled:

In sooth, 'twas strange this old
man's verse

Could call them from their marble
hearse.

The harper smiled, well pleased;
for ne'er

Was flattery lost on poet's ear.

A simple race! they waste their
toil 620

For the vain tribute of a smile;

E'en when in age their flame ex-
pires,
Her dulcet breath can fan its
fires:
Their drooping fancy wakes at
praise,
And strives to trim the short-lived
blaze.

Smiled then, well pleased, the aged
man,
And thus his tale continued ran.

CANTO FIFTH

I

CALL it not vain : — they do not err,
Who say that when the poet dies
Mute Nature mourns her worship-
per

And celebrates his obsequies ;
Who say tall cliff and cavern lone
For the departed bard make moan ;
That mountains weep in crystal
rill ;

That flowers in tears of balm distil ;
Through his loved groves that
breezes sigh,
And oaks in deeper groan reply, 10
And rivers teach their rushing
wave

To murmur dirges round his grave.

II

Not that, in sooth, o'er mortal urn
Those things inanimate can mourn,
But that the stream, the wood, the
gale,

Is vocal with the plaintive wail
Of those who, else forgotten long,
Lived in the poet's faithful song,
And, with the poet's parting breath,
Whose memory feels a second
death. 20

The maid's pale shade, who wails
her lot,
That love, true love, should be for-
got,
From rose and hawthorn shakes
the tear

Upon the gentle minstrel's bier :
The phantom knight, his glory
fled,

Mourns o'er the field he heaped
with dead,

Mounts the wild blast that sweeps
amain

And shrieks along the battle-plain ;
The chief, whose antique crownlet
long 29

Still sparkled in the feudal song,
Now, from the mountain's misty
throne,

Sees, in the thanedom once his
own,

His ashes undistinguished lie,
His place, his power, his memory
die ;

His groans the lonely caverns fill,
His tears of rage impel the rill ;
All mourn the minstrel's harp un-
strung,

Their name unknown, their praise
unsung.

III

Scarcely the hot assault was
stayed,

The terms of truce were scarcely
made, 40

When they could spy, from Brank-
some's towers,

The advancing march of martial
powers.

Thick clouds of dust afar ap-
peared,

And trampling steeds were faintly
heard ;

Bright spears above the columns
dun

Glanced momentary to the sun ;
And feudal banners fair displayed
The bands that moved to Brank-
some's aid.

IV

Vails not to tell each hardy clan,
From the fair Middle Marches
came ; 50

The Bloody Heart blazed in the
van,

Announcing Douglas, dreaded
name!

Vails not to tell what steeds did
spurn,

Where the Seven Spears of Wed-
derburne

Their men in battle-order set,
And Swinton laid the lance in rest
That tamed of yore the sparkling
crest

Of Clarence's Plantagenet.
Nor list I say what hundreds
more,

From the rich Merse and Lammer-
more, 60

And Tweed's fair borders, to the
war,

Beneath the crest of Old Dunbar
And Hepburn's mingled banners,
come

Down the steep mountain glitter-
ing far,

And shouting still, 'A Home! a
Home!'

V

Now squire and knight, from
Branksome sent,

On many a courteous message
went:

To every chief and lord they paid
Meet thanks for prompt and power-
ful aid,

And told them how a truce was
made, 70

And how a day of fight was ta'en
'Twixt Musgrave and stout Delo-
raine;

And how the Ladye prayed them
dear

That all would stay the fight to see,
And deign, in love and courtesy,

To taste of Branksome cheer.
Nor, while they bade to feast each
Scot,

Were England's noble lords forgot.
Himself, the hoary seneschal,
Rode forth, in seemly terms to
call 80

Those gallant foes to Branksome
Hall.

Accepted Howard, than whom
knight

Was never dubbed, more bold in
fight,

Nor, when from war and armor
free,

More famed for stately courtesy;
But angry Dacre rather chose
In his pavilion to repose.

VI

Now, noble dame, perchance you
ask

How these two hostile armies
met,

Deeming it were no easy task 90
To keep the truce which here
was set;

Where martial spirits, all on fire,
Breathed only blood and mortal
ire.

By mutual inroads, mutual blows,
By habit, and by nation, foes,

They met on Teviot's strand;
They met and sate them mingled
down,

Without a threat, without a frown,
As brothers meet in foreign land:

The hands, the spear that lately
grasped, 100

Still in the mailed gauntlet
clasped,

Were interchanged in greeting
dear;

Visors were raised and faces
shown,

And many a friend, to friend made
known,

Partook of social cheer.
Some drove the jolly bowl about;

With dice and draughts some
chased the day;

And some, with many a merry
shout,

In riot, revelry, and rout,
Pursued the football play. 110

VII

Yet, be it known, had bugles
blown

Or sign of war been seen,

Those bands, so fair together
ranged,
Those hands, so frankly inter-
changed,

Had dyed with gore the green :
The merry shout by Teviot-side
Had sunk in war-cries wild and
wide,

And in the groan of death ;
And whingers, now in friendship
bare,

The social meal to part and
share, 120

Had found a bloody sheath.
'Twixt truce and war, such sudden
change

Was not infrequent, nor held
strange,

In the old Border-day ;
But yet on Branksome's towers
and town,

In peaceful merriment, sunk down
The sun's declining ray.

VIII

The blithesome signs of wassail
gay

Decayed not with the dying day ;
Soon through the latticed windows
tall 130

Of lofty Branksome's lordly hall,
Divided square by shafts of stone,
Huge flakes of ruddy lustre shone ;
Nor less the gilded rafters rang
With merry harp and beakers'
clang ;

And frequent, on the darkening
plain,

Loud hollo, whoop, or whistle
ran,

As bands, their stragglers to re-
gain,

Give the shrill watchword of
their clan ;

And revellers, o'er their bowls,
proclaim 140

Douglas' or Dacre's conquering
name.

IX

Less frequent heard, and fainter
still,

At length the various clamors
died,

And you might hear from Brank-
some hill

No sound but Teviot's rushing
tide ;

Save when the changing sentinel
The challenge of his watch could
tell ;

And save where, through the dark
profound,

The clanging axe and hammer's
sound

Rung from the nether lawn ; 150
For many a busy hand toiled there,
Strong pales to shape and beams
to square,

The lists' dread barriers to prepare
Against the morrow's dawn.

X

Margaret from hall did soon re-
treat,

Despite the dame's reproving
eye ;

Nor marked she, as she left her
seat,

Full many a stifled sigh :

For many a noble warrior strove
To win the Flower of Teviot's
love, 160

And many a bold ally.

With throbbing head and anxious
heart,

All in her lonely bower apart,

In broken sleep she lay.

By times, from silken couch she
rose ;

While yet the bannered hosts re-
pose,

She viewed the dawning day :

Of all the hundreds sunk to rest,
First woke the loveliest and the
best.

XI

She gazed upon the inner court, 170
Which in the tower's tall sha-
dow lay,

Where coursers' clang and stamp
and snort

Had rung the livelong yesterday :

Now still as death; till stalking
slow, —

The jingling spurs announced
his tread, —

A stately warrior passed below;
But when he raised his plumed
head —

Blessed Mary! can it be? —
Secure, as if in Ousenam bowers,
He walks through Branksome's
hostile towers, 180

With fearless step and free.
She dared not sign, she dared not
speak —

O, if one page's slumbers break,
His blood the price must pay!
Not all the pearls Queen Mary
wears,

Not Margaret's yet more precious
tears,

Shall buy his life a day.

XII

Yet was his hazard small; for well
You may bethink you of the spell
Of that sly urchin page: 190

This to his lord he did impart,
And made him seem, by glamour
art,

A knight from Hermitage.
Unchallenged, thus, the warder's
post,

The court, unchallenged, thus he
crossed,

For all the vassalage;
But O, what magic's quaint dis-
guise

Could blind fair Margaret's azure
eyes!

She started from her seat;
While with surprise and fear she
strove, 200

And both could scarcely master
love —

Lord Henry's at her feet.

XIII

Oft have I mused what purpose
bad

That foul malicious urchin had
To bring this meeting round,

For happy love's a heavenly
sight,

And by a vile malignant sprite

In such no joy is found;

And oft I've deemed, perchance
he thought

Their erring passion might have
wrought 210

Sorrow and sin and shame,
And death to Cranstoun's gallant
Knight,

And to the gentle Ladye bright
Disgrace and loss of fame.

But earthly spirit could not tell
The heart of them that loved so
well.

True love's the gift which God
has given

To man alone beneath the hea-
ven:

It is not fantasy's hot fire,
Whose wishes, soon as granted,
fly; 220

It liveth not in fierce desire,
With dead desire it doth not
die;

It is the secret sympathy,
The silver link, the silken tie,
Which heart to heart, and mind to
mind,

In body and in soul can bind. —
Now leave we Margaret and her
knight,

To tell you of the approaching
fight.

XIV

Their warning blasts the bugles
blew,

The pipe's shrill port aroused
each clan; 230

In haste the deadly strife to view,
The trooping warriors eager
ran:

Thick round the lists their lances
stood,

Like blasted pines in Ettrick
wood;

To Branksome many a look they
threw,

The combatants' approach to view,

And bandied many a word of
boast
About the knight each favored
most.

XV

Meantime full anxious was the
dame;

For now arose disputed claim ²⁴⁰
Of who should fight for Deloraine,
'Twixt Harden and 'twixt Thirle-
stane.

They gan to reckon kin and rent,
And frowning brow on brow was
bent;

But yet not long the strife — for,
lo!

Himself, the Knight of Deloraine,
Strong, as it seemed, and free from
pain,

In armor sheathed from top to
toe,
Appeared and craved the combat
due.

The dame her charm successful
knew, ²⁵⁰

And the fierce chiefs their claims
withdrew.

XVI

When for the lists they sought the
plain,

The stately Ladye's silken rein
Did noble Howard hold;
Unarmed by her side he walked,
And much in courteous phrase
they talked

Of feats of arms of old.
Costly his garb — his Flemish ruff
Fell o'er his doublet, shaped of
buff,

With satin slashed and lined; ²⁶⁰
Tawny his boot, and gold his spur.
His cloak was all of Poland fur,
His hose with silver twined;
His Bilboa blade, by Marchmen
felt,

Hung in a broad and studded belt;
Hence, in rude phrase, the Bor-
derers still

Called noble Howard Belted Will.

XVII

Behind Lord Howard and the
dame

Fair Margaret on her palfrey
came,

Whose footcloth swept the
ground; ²⁷⁰

White was her wimple and her
veil,

And her loose locks a chaplet pale
Of whitest roses bound;

The lordly Angus, by her side,
In courtesy to cheer her tried;
Without his aid, her hand in vain
Had strove to guide her broidered
rein.

He deemed she shuddered at the
sight

Of warriors met for mortal fight;
But cause of terror, all un-
guessed, ²⁸⁰

Was fluttering in her gentle breast,
When, in their chairs of crimson
placed,

The dame and she the barriers
graced.

XVIII

Prize of the field, the young Bue-
cleuch

An English knight led forth to
view;

Scarce rued the boy his present
plight,

So much he longed to see the fight.
Within the lists in knightly pride
High Home and haughty Dacre
ride;

Their leading staffs of steel they
wield, ²⁹⁰

As marshals of the mortal field,
While to each knight their care
assigned

Like vantage of the sun and wind.
Then heralds hoarse did loud pro-
claim,

In King and Queen and Warden's
name,

That none, while lasts the strife,
Should dare, by look or sign or
word,

Aid to a champion to afford,
 On peril of his life;
 And not a breath the silence
 broke ³⁰⁰
 Till thus the alternate heralds
 spoke: —

XIX

ENGLISH HERALD

'Here standeth Richard of Musgrave,
 Good knight and true, and freely
 born,
 Amends from Deloraine to crave,
 For foul despiteous scathe and
 scorn.
 He sayeth that William of Deloraine
 Is traitor false by Border laws;
 This with his sword he will maintain,
 So help him God and his good
 cause!'

XX

SCOTTISH HERALD

'Here standeth William of Deloraine,
 Good knight and true, of noble ³¹⁰
 strain,
 Who sayeth that foul treason's
 stain,
 Since he bore arms, ne'er soiled
 his coat;
 And that, so help him God above!
 He will on Musgrave's body
 prove
 He lies most foully in his throat.'

LORD DACRE

'Forward, brave champions, to the
 fight!
 Sound trumpets!'

LORD HOME

'God defend the right!' —

Then, Teviot, how thine echoes
 rang,
 When bugle-sound and trumpet-
 clang ³²⁰

Let loose the martial foes,
 And in mid-list, with shield poised
 high,
 And measured step and wary eye,
 The combatants did close!

XXI

Ill would it suit your gentle ear,
 Ye lovely listeners, to hear
 How to the axe the helms did
 sound,
 And blood poured down from
 many a wound;
 For desperate was the strife and
 long,
 And either warrior fierce and
 strong. ³³⁰
 But, were each dame a listening
 knight,
 I well could tell how warriors
 fight;
 For I have seen war's lightning
 flashing,
 Seen the claymore with bayonet
 clashing,
 Seen through red blood the war-
 horse dashing,
 And scorned, amid the reeling
 strife,
 To yield a step for death or life.

XXII

'Tis done, 'tis done! that fatal
 blow
 Has stretched him on the bloody
 plain;
 He strives to rise — brave Musgrave, no! ³⁴⁰
 Thence never shalt thou rise
 again!
 He chokes in blood — some
 friendly hand
 Undo the visor's barred band,
 Unfix the gorget's iron clasp,
 And give him room for life to
 gasp! —
 O, bootless aid! — haste, holy
 friar,
 Haste, ere the sinner shall expire!
 Of all his guilt let him be shriven,
 And smooth his path from earth
 to heaven!

XXIII

In haste the holy friar sped ; — 350
 His naked foot was dyed with red,
 As through the lists he ran ;
 Unmindful of the shouts on high
 That hailed the conqueror's vic-
 tory,

He raised the dying man ;
 Loose waved his silver beard and
 hair,

As o'er him he kneeled down in
 prayer ;

And still the crucifix on high
 He holds before his darkening eye ;
 And still he bends an anxious
 ear, 360

His faltering penitence to hear ;
 Still props him from the bloody
 sod,

Still, even when soul and body
 part,

Pours ghostly comfort on his heart,
 And bids him trust in God !

Unheard he prays ; — the death-
 pang's o'er !

Richard of Musgrave breathes no
 more.

XXIV

As if exhausted in the fight,
 Or musing o'er the piteous sight,
 The silent victor stands ; 370

His beaver did he not unclasp,
 Marked not the shouts, felt not the
 grasp

Of gratulating hands.

When lo ! strange cries of wild sur-
 prise,

Mingled with seeming terror, rise
 Among the Scottish bands ;

And all, amid the thronged array,
 In panic haste gave open way
 To a half-naked ghastly man,

Who downward from the castle
 ran : 380

He crossed the barriers at a bound,
 And wild and haggard looked
 around,

As dizzy and in pain ;
 And all upon the armed ground
 Knew William of Deloraine !

Each ladye sprung from seat with
 speed ;

Vaulted each marshal from his
 steed ;

' And who art thou,' they cried,
 ' Who hast this battle fought and
 won ?'

His plumed helm was soon un-
 done — 390

' Cranstoun of Teviot-side !
 For this fair prize I've fought and
 won,' —

And to the Ladye led her son.

XXV

Full oft the rescued boy she kissed,
 And often pressed him to her
 breast,

For, under all her dauntless show,
 Her heart had throbbed at every
 blow ;

Yet not Lord Cranstoun deigned
 she greet,

Though low he kneeled at her
 feet.

Me lists not tell what words were
 made, 400

What Douglas, Home, and Howard
 said —

For Howard was a generous
 foe —

And how the clan united prayed

The Ladye would the feud fore-
 go,

And deign to bless the nuptial
 hour

Of Cranstoun's lord and Teviot's
 Flower.

XXVI

She looked to river, looked to hill,
 Thought on the Spirit's pro-
 phesy,

Then broke her silence stern and
 still :

' Not you, but Fate, has van-
 quished me ; 410

Their influence kindly stars may
 shower

On Teviot's tide and Branksome's
 tower,

For pride is quelled and love is free.'

She took fair Margaret by the hand,

Who, breathless, trembling, scarce might stand;

That hand to Cranstoun's lord gave she:

'As I am true to thee and thine,

Do thou be true to me and mine!

This clasp of love our bond shall be,

For this is your betrothing day,

And all these noble lords shall stay,

To grace it with their company.'

XXVII

All as they left the listed plain,

Much of the story she did gain:

How Cranstoun fought with Deloraine,

And of his page, and of the book

Which from the wounded knight he took;

And how he sought her castle high,

That morn, by help of gramarye;

How, in Sir William's armor dight,
Stolen by his page, while slept the knight,

He took on him the single fight,

But half his tale he left unsaid,

And lingered till he joined the maid.—

Cared not the Ladye to betray

Her mystic arts in view of day;

But well she thought, ere midnight came,

Of that strange page the pride to tame,

From his foul hands the book to save,

And send it back to Michael's grave.—

Needs not to tell each tender word

'Twixt Margaret and 'twixt Cranstoun's lord;

Nor how she told of former woes,
And how her bosom fell and rose

While he and Musgrave bandied blows.—

Needs not these lovers' joys to tell;

One day, fair maids, you'll know them well.

XXVIII

William of Deloraine some chance
Had wakened from his deathlike trance,

And taught that in the listed plain

Another, in his arms and shield,
Against fierce Musgrave axe did wield,

Under the name of Deloraine.

Hence, to the field unarmed he ran,

And hence his presence scared the clan,

Who held him for some fleeting wraith,

And not a man of blood and breath.

Not much this new ally he loved,
Yet, when he saw what hap had

proved,

He greeted him right heartilie:
He would not waken old debate,

For he was void of rancorous hate,
Though rude and scant of courtesy;

In raids he spilt but seldom blood,
Unless when men-at-arms with-

stood,

Or, as was meet, for deadly feud.
He ne'er bore grudge for stalwart

blow,
Ta'en in fair fight from gallant foe.

And so 't was seen of him e'en now,

When on dead Musgrave he looked down:

Grief darkened on his rugged brow,

Though half disguised with a frown;

And thus, while sorrow bent his head,
His foeman's epitaph he made:

XXIX

'Now, Richard Musgrave, liest
 thou here,
 I ween, my deadly enemy;
 For, if I slew thy brother dear,
 Thou slew'st a sister's son to
 me;
 And when I lay in dungeon dark
 Of Naworth Castle long months
 three, 480
 Till ransomed for a thousand
 mark,
 Dark Musgrave, it was long of
 thee.
 And, Musgrave, could our fight be
 tried,
 And thou wert now alive, as I,
 No mortal man should us divide,
 Till one, or both of us, did die:
 Yet rest thee God! for well I
 know
 I ne'er shall find a nobler foe.
 In all the northern countries here,
 Whose word is Snaffle, spur, and
 spear, 490
 Thou wert the best to follow gear.
 'T was pleasure, as we looked be-
 hind,
 To see how thou the chase couldst
 wind,
 Cheer the dark bloodhound on his
 way,
 And with the bugle rouse the
 fray!
 I'd give the lands of Deloraine,
 Dark Musgrave were alive again.'

XXX

So mourned he till Lord Dacre's
 band
 Were bowning back to Cumber-
 land.
 They raised brave Musgrave from
 the field 500
 And laid him on his bloody shield;
 On levelled lances, four and four,
 By turns, the noble burden bore.
 Before, at times, upon the gale
 Was heard the Minstrel's plain-
 tive wail;
 Behind, four priests in sable stole

Sung requiem for the warrior's
 soul;
 Around, the horsemen slowly
 rode;
 With trailing pikes the spearmen
 trode;
 And thus the gallant knight they
 bore 510
 Through Liddesdale to Leven's
 shore,
 Thence to Holme Coltrame's lofty
 nave,
 And laid him in his father's grave.

THE harp's wild notes, though
 hushed the song,
 The mimic march of death pro-
 long;
 Now seems it far, and now a-near,
 Now meets, and now eludes the
 ear,
 Now seems some mountain side to
 sweep,
 Now faintly dies in valley deep,
 Seems now as if the Minstrel's
 wail, 520
 Now the sad requiem, loads the
 gale;
 Last, o'er the warrior's closing
 grave,
 Rung the full choir in choral
 stave.

After due pause, they bade him
 tell
 Why he, who touched the harp so
 well,
 Should thus, with ill-rewarded toil,
 Wander a poor and thankless soil,
 When the more generous Southern
 Land
 Would well requite his skilful
 hand.

The aged harper, howsoe'er 530
 His only friend, his harp, was
 dear,
 Liked not to hear it ranked so
 high
 Above his flowing poesy:

Less liked he still that scornful
jeer
Misprized the land he loved so
dear;
High was the sound as thus again
The bard resumed his minstrel
strain.

CANTO SIXTH

I

BREATHES there the man, with
soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land?
Whose heart hath ne'er within
him burned
As home his footsteps he hath
turned
From wandering on a foreign
strand?

If such there breathe, go, mark
him well;
For him no minstrel raptures
swell;

High though his titles, proud his
name,
Boundless his wealth as wish can
claim, — ¹⁰

Despite those titles, power, and
pelf,
The wretch, concentred all in self,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust from whence he
sprung,
Unwept, unhonored, and unsung.

II

O Caledonia, stern and wild,
Meet nurse for a poetic child!
Land of brown heath and shaggy
wood,

Land of the mountain and the
flood, ²⁰

Land of my sires! what mortal
hand

Can e'er untie the filial band
That knits me to thy rugged
strand!

Still, as I view each well-known
scene,

Think what is now and what hath
been,

Seems as to me, of all bereft,
Sole friends thy woods and streams
were left;

And thus I love them better still,
Even in extremity of ill.

By Yarrow's stream still let me
stray, ³⁰

Though none should guide my
feeble way;

Still feel the breeze down Ettrick
break,

Although it chill my withered
cheek;

Still lay my head by Teviot-stone,
Though there, forgotten and alone,
The bard may draw his parting
groan.

III

Not scorned like me, to Brank-
some Hall

The minstrels came at festive call;
Trooping they came from near and
far,

The jovial priests of mirth and
war; ⁴⁰

Alike for feast and fight prepared,
Battle and banquet both they
shared.

Of late, before each martial clan
They blew their death-note in the
van,

But now for every merry mate
Rose the portcullis' iron grate;
They sound the pipe, they strike
the string,

They dance, they revel, and they
sing,

Till the rude turrets shake and
ring. ⁴⁹

IV

Me lists not at this tide declare
The splendor of the spousal
rite,

How mustered in the chapel fair
Both maid and matron, squire
and knight;

Me lists not tell of owches rare,
 Of mantles green, and braided
 hair,
 And kirtles furred with miniver;
 What plumage waved the altar
 round,
 How spurs and ringing chainlets
 sound:
 And hard it were for bard to speak
 The changeful hue of Margaret's
 cheek, 60
 That lovely hue which comes and
 flies,
 As awe and shame alternate rise!

V

Some bards have sung, the Ladye
 high
 Chapel or altar came not nigh,
 Nor durst the rites of spousal
 grace,
 So much she feared each holy
 place.
 False slanders these:—I trust
 right well,
 She wrought not by forbidden
 spell,
 For mighty words and signs have
 power
 O'er sprites in planetary hour; 70
 Yet scarce I praise their ventu-
 rous part
 Who tamper with such dangerous
 art.
 But this for faithful truth I say,—
 The Ladye by the altar stood,
 Of sable velvet her array,
 And on her head a crimson
 hood,
 With pearls embroidered and en-
 twined,
 Guarded with gold, with ermine
 lined;
 A merlin sat upon her wrist,
 Held by a leash of silken twist. 80

VI

The spousal rites were ended
 soon;
 'Twas now the merry hour of
 noon,

And in the lofty arched hall
 Was spread the gorgeous festival.
 Steward and squire, with heedful
 haste,
 Marshalled the rank of every
 guest;
 Pages, with ready blade, were
 there,
 The mighty meal to carve and
 share:
 O'er capon, heron-shew, and
 crane,
 And princely peacock's gilded
 train, 90
 And o'er the boar-head, garnished
 brave,
 And cygnet from Saint Mary's
 wave,
 O'er ptarmigan and venison,
 The priest had spoke his benison.
 Then rose the riot and the din,
 Above, beneath, without, within!
 For, from the lofty balcony,
 Rung trumpet, shalm, and psal-
 tery:
 Their clanging bowls old warriors
 quaffed,
 Loudly they spoke and loudly
 laughed; 100
 Whispered young knights, in tone
 more mild,
 To ladies fair, and ladies smiled.
 The hooded hawks, high perched
 on beam,
 The clamor joined with whistling
 scream,
 And flapped their wings and shook
 their bells,
 In concert with the stag-hounds'
 yells.
 Round go the flasks of ruddy wine,
 From Bordeaux, Orleans, or the
 Rhine;
 Their tasks the busy sewers ply,
 And all is mirth and revelry. 110

VII

The Goblin Page, omitting still
 No opportunity of ill,
 Strove now, while blood ran hot
 and high,

To rouse debate and jealousy;
 Till Conrad, Lord of Wolfenstein,
 By nature fierce, and warm with
 wine,
 And now in humor highly crossed
 About some steeds his band had
 lost,
 High words to words succeeding
 still,
 Smote with his gauntlet stout
 Hunthill, 120
 A hot and hardy Rutherford,
 Whom men called Dickon Draw-
 the-Sword.
 He took it on the page's saye,
 Hunthill had driven these steeds
 away.

Then Howard, Home, and Douglas
 rose,
 The kindling discord to compose;
 Stern Rutherford right little said,
 But bit his glove and shook his
 head.

A fortnight thence, in Inglewood,
 Stout Conrad, cold, and drenched
 in blood, 130

His bosom gored with many a
 wound,

Was by a woodman's lyme-dog
 found:

Unknown the manner of his death,
 Gone was his brand, both sword
 and sheath;

But ever from that time, 't was
 said,

That Dickon wore a Cologne blade.

VIII

The dwarf, who feared his master's
 eye

Might his foul treachery espie,
 Now sought the castle buttery,
 Where many a yeoman, bold and
 free, 140

Revelled as merrily and well
 As those that sat in lordly selle.

Watt Tinlinn there did frankly
 raise

The pledge to Arthur Fire-the-
 Braes;

And he, as by his breeding bound,

To Howard's merry men sent it
 round.

To quit them, on the English side,
 Red Roland Forster loudly cried,
 'A deep carouse to yon fair bride!'
 At every pledge, from vat and pail,
 Foamed forth in floods the nut-
 brown ale, 151

While shout the riders every one;
 Such day of mirth ne'er cheered
 their clan,

Since old Buccleuch the name did
 gain,

When in the cleuch the buck was
 ta'en.

IX

The wily page, with vengeful
 thought

Remembered him of Tinlinn's
 yew,

And swore it should be dearly
 bought

That ever he the arrow drew.

First, he the yeoman did molest
 With bitter gibe and taunting
 jest; 161

Told how he fled at Solway strife,
 And how Hob Armstrong cheered
 his wife;

Then, shunning still his powerful
 arm,

At unawares he wrought him
 harm;

From trencher stole his choicest
 cheer,

Dashed from his lips his can of
 beer;

Then, to his knee sly creeping
 on,

With bodkin pierced him to the
 bone:

The venom'd wound and festering
 joint 170

Long after rued that bodkin's
 point.

The startled yeoman swore and
 spurned,

And board and flagons overturned.
 Riot and clamor wild began;

Back to the hall the urchin ran,

Took in a darkling nook his post,
And grinned, and muttered, 'Lost!
lost! lost!'

X

By this, the dame, lest farther
fray
Should mar the concord of the
day,

Had bid the minstrels tune their
lay. 180

And first stepped forth old Albert
Græme,

The minstrel of that ancient name:
Was none who struck the harp so
well

Within the Land Debatable;
Well friended too, his hardy kin,
Whoever lost, were sure to win;
They sought the beeves that made
their broth

In Scotland and in England both.
In homely guise, as nature bade,
His simple song the Borderer said.

XI

ALBERT GRÆME

It was an English ladye bright, 191
(The sun shines fair on Carlisle
wall)

And she would marry a Scottish
knight,
For Love will still be lord of all.

Blithely they saw the rising sun,
When he shone fair on Carlisle
wall;

But they were sad ere day was
done,

Though Love was still the lord
of all.

Her sire gave brooch and jewel
fine,

Where the sun shines fair on
Carlisle wall; 200

Her brother gave but a flask of
wine,

For ire that Love was lord of
all.

For she had lands both meadow
and lea,

Where the sun shines fair on
Carlisle wall;

And he swore her death, ere he
would see

A Scottish knight the lord of all!

XII

That wine she had not tasted well,
(The sun shines fair on Carlisle
wall)

When dead, in her true love's arms,
she fell, 209

For Love was still the lord of all.

He pierced her brother to the
heart,

Where the sun shines fair on
Carlisle wall; —

So perish all would true love part,
That Love may still be lord of
all!

And then he took the cross divine,
Where the sun shines fair on
Carlisle wall,

And died for her sake in Palestine,
So Love was still the lord of all.

Now all ye lovers, that faithful
prove,

(The sun shines fair on Carlisle
wall) 220

Pray for their souls who died for
love,

For Love shall still be lord of
all!

XIII

As ended Albert's simple lay,
Arose a bard of loftier port,

For sonnet, rhyme, and roundelay
Renowned in haughty Henry's
court:

There rung thy harp, unrivalled
long,

Fitztraver of the silver song!
The gentle Surrey loved his lyre —

Who has not heard of Surrey's
fame? 230

His was the hero's soul of fire,
 And his the bard's immortal
 name,
 And his was love, exalted high
 By all the glow of chivalry.

XIV

They sought together climes afar,
 And oft, within some olive grove,
 When even came with twinkling
 star,
 They sung of Surrey's absent
 love.
 His step the Italian peasant stayed,
 And deemed that spirits from on
 high, ²⁴⁰
 Round where some hermit saint
 was laid,
 Were breathing heavenly mel-
 ody;
 So sweet did harp and voice com-
 bine
 To praise the name of Geraldine.

XV

Fitztraver, O, what tongue may say
 The pangs thy faithful bosom
 knew,
 When Surrey of the deathless lay
 Ungrateful Tudor's sentence
 slew?
 Regardless of the tyrant's frown,
 His harp called wrath and ven-
 geance down. ²⁵⁰
 He left, for Naworth's iron towers,
 Windsor's green glades and courtly
 bowers,
 And, faithful to his patron's name,
 With Howard still Fitztraver
 came;
 Lord William's foremost favorite
 he,
 And chief of all his minstrelsy.

XVI

FITZTRAVER

'Twas All-souls' eve, and Sur-
 rey's heart beat high;
 He heard the midnight bell
 with anxious start,

Which told the mystic hour, ap-
 proaching nigh,
 When wise Cornelius promised
 by his art ²⁶⁰
 To show to him the ladye of
 his heart,
 Albeit betwixt them roared the
 ocean grim;
 Yet so the sage had hight to
 play his part,
 That he should see her form in
 life and limb,
 And mark if still she loved and
 still she thought of him.

XVII

Dark was the vaulted room of
 gramarye,
 To which the wizard led the
 gallant knight,
 Save that before a mirror, huge
 and high,
 A hallowed taper shed a glim-
 mering light
 On mystic implements of magic
 might, ²⁷⁰
 On cross, and character, and
 talisman,
 And almagest, and altar, no-
 thing bright;
 For fitful was the lustre, pale
 and wan,
 As watch-light by the bed of some
 departing man.

XVIII

But soon, within that mirror
 huge and high,
 Was seen a self-emitted light
 to gleam;
 And forms upon its breast the
 earl gan spy,
 Cloudy and indistinct as fever-
 ish dream;
 Till, slow arranging and de-
 fined, they seem
 To form a lordly and a lofty
 room, ²⁸⁰
 Part lighted by a lamp with
 silver beam,

Placed by a couch of Agra's
silken loom,
And part by moonshine pale, and
part was hid in gloom.

XIX

Fair all the pageant — but how
passing fair
The slender form which lay on
couch of Ind!
O'er her white bosom strayed
her hazel hair,
Pale her dear cheek, as if for
love she pined;
All in her night-robe loose she
lay reclined,
And pensive read from tablet
eburnine
Some strain that seemed her
inmost soul to find: 290
That favored strain was Surrey's
raptured line,
That fair and lovely form the
Lady Geraldine.

XX

Slow rolled the clouds upon the
lovely form,
And swept the goodly vision
all away —
So royal envy rolled the murky
storm
O'er my beloved Master's glori-
ous day.
Thou jealous, ruthless tyrant!
Heaven repay
On thee, and on thy children's
latest line,
The wild caprice of thy de-
spotie sway,
The gory bridal bed, the plun-
dered shrine, 300
The murdered Surrey's blood, the
tears of Geraldine!

XXI

Both Scots and Southern chiefs pro-
long
Applauses of Fitztraver's song;
These hated Henry's name as
death,

And those still held the ancient
faith.

Then from his seat with lofty air
Rose Harold, bard of brave Saint
Clair, —
Saint Clair, who, feasting high at
Home,
Had with that lord to battle come.
Harold was born where restless
seas 310
Howl round the storm-swept Or-
cades;
Where erst Saint Clairs held
princely sway
O'er isle and islet, strait and
bay; —
Still nods their palace to its fall,
Thy pride and sorrow, fair Kirk-
wall! —
Thence oft he marked fierce Pent-
land rave,
As if grim Odin rode her wave,
And watched the whilst, with vis-
age pale
And throbbing heart, the strug-
gling sail;
For all of wonderful and wild 320
Had rapture for the lonely child.

XXII

And much of wild and wonderful
In these rude isles might Fancy
cull;
For thither came in times afar
Stern Lochlin's sons of roving war,
The Norsemen, trained to spoil
and blood,
Skilled to prepare the raven's
food,
Kings of the main their leaders
brave,
Their barks the dragons of the
wave;
And there, in many a stormy vale,
The Scald had told his wondrous
tale, 331
And many a Runic column high
Had witnessed grim idolatry.
And thus had Harold in his youth
Learned many a Saga's rhyme un-
couth, —

Of that Sea-Snake, tremendous
 curled,
 Whose monstrous circle girds the
 world;
 Of those dread Maids whose hide-
 ous yell
 Maddens the battle's bloody
 swell;
 Of chiefs who, guided through the
 gloom 340
 By the pale death-lights of the
 tomb,
 Ransacked the graves of warriors
 old,
 Their falchions wrenched from
 corpses' hold,
 Waked the deaf tomb with war's
 alarms,
 And bade the dead arise to arms!
 With war and wonder all on flame,
 To Roslin's bowers young Harold
 came,
 Where, by sweet glen and green-
 wood tree,
 He learned a milder minstrelsy;
 Yet something of the Northern
 spell 350
 Mixed with the softer numbers
 well.

XXIII

HAROLD

O, listen, listen, ladies gay!
 No haughty feat of arms I tell;
 Soft is the note, and sad the lay,
 That mourns the lovely Rosa-
 belle.
 'Moor, moor the barge, ye gallant
 crew!
 And, gentle ladye, deign to stay!
 Rest thee in Castle Ravensheuch,
 Nor tempt the stormy firth to-
 day.
 'The blackening wave is edged
 with white; 360
 To inch and rock the sea-mews
 fly;

The fishers have heard the Water
 Sprite,
 Whose screams forbode that
 wreck is nigh.

'Last night the gifted Seer did
 view
 A wet shroud swathed round
 ladye gay;
 Then stay thee, fair, in Ravens-
 heuch:
 Why cross the gloomy firth to-
 day?'

'T is not because Lord Lindesay's
 heir
 To-night at Roslin leads the
 ball,
 But that my ladye-mother
 there 370
 Sits lonely in her castle-hall.

'T is not because the ring they
 ride,
 And Lindesay at the ring rides
 well,
 But that my sire the wine will
 chide,
 If 't is not filled by Rosabelle.'

O'er Roslin all that dreary night
 A wondrous blaze was seen to
 gleam;
 'T was broader than the watch-fire
 light,
 And redder than the bright
 moonbeam.

It glared on Roslin's castled
 rock, 380
 It ruddied all the copsewood
 glen;
 'T was seen from Dreyden's groves
 of oak,
 And seen from caverned Haw-
 thornden.

Seemed all on fire that chapel
 proud
 Where Roslin's chiefs uncoffined
 lie,

Each baron, for a sable shroud,
Sheathed in his iron panoply.

Seemed all on fire within, around,
Deep sacristy and altar's pale;
Shone every pillar foliage-
bound, 390
And glimmered all the dead
men's mail.

Blazed battlement and pinnet high,
Blazed every rose-carved but-
tress fair —
So still they blaze when fate is
nigh
The lordly line of high Saint
Clair.

There are twenty of Roslin's bar-
ons bold
Lie buried within that proud
chappelle;
Each one the holy vault doth
hold —
But the sea holds lovely Rosa-
belle!

And each Saint Clair was buried
there, 400
With candle, with book, and
with knell;
But the sea-caves rung and the
wild winds sung
The dirge of lovely Rosabelle.

XXIV

So sweet was Harold's piteous
lay,
Scarce marked the guests the
darkened hall,
Though, long before the sinking
day,
A wondrous shade involved
them all.
It was not eddying mist or fog,
Drained by the sun from fen or
bog;
Of no eclipse had sages told; 410
And yet, as it came on apace,
Each one could scarce his neigh-
bor's face,

Could scarce his own stretched
hand behold.
A secret horror checked the
feast,
And chilled the soul of every
guest;
Even the high dame stood half
aghast,
She knew some evil on the blast;
The elfish page fell to the ground,
And, shuddering, muttered,
'Found! found! found!'

XXV

Then sudden through the darkened
air 420
A flash of lightning came;
So broad, so bright, so red the
glare,
The castle seemed on flame.
Glanced every rafter of the hall,
Glanced every shield upon the
wall;
Each trophied beam, each sculp-
tured stone,
Were instant seen and instant
gone;
Full through the guests' bedazzled
band
Resistless flashed the levin-brand,
And filled the hall with smoulder-
ing smoke, 430
As on the elfish page it broke.
It broke with thunder long and
loud,
Dismayed the brave, appalled the
proud, —
From sea to sea the larum rung;
On Berwick wall, and at Carlisle
withal,
To arms the startled warders
sprung.
When ended was the dreadful roar,
The elfish dwarf was seen no
more!

XXVI

Some heard a voice in Branksome
Hall,
Some saw a sight, not seen by
all; 440

That dreadful voice was heard by
some
Cry, with loud summons, 'GYLBIN,
COME!'

And on the spot where burst the
brand,
Just where the page had flung him
down,

Some saw an arm, and some a
hand,

And some the waving of a gown.
The guests in silence prayed and
shook,

And terror dimmed each lofty look.
But none of all the astonished train
Was so dismayed as Deloraine: 450
His blood did freeze, his brain did
burn,

'T was feared his mind would ne'er
return;

For he was speechless, ghastly,
wan,

Like him of whom the story ran,
Who spoke the spectre-hound in
Man.

At length by fits he darkly told,
With broken hint and shuddering
cold,

That he had seen right certainly
*A shape with amice wrapped
around,*

*With a wrought Spanish baldric
bound,* 460

*Like pilgrim from beyond the
sea;*

And knew — but how it mattered
not —

It was the wizard, Michael Scott.

XXVII

The anxious crowd, with horror
pale,

All trembling heard the wondrous
tale:

No sound was made, no word was
spoke,

Till noble Angus silence broke;
And he a solemn sacred plight
Did to Saint Bride of Douglas
make, 469

That he a pilgrimage would take

To Melrose Abbey, for the sake
Of Michael's restless sprite.
Then each, to ease his troubled
breast,

To some blest saint his prayers
addressed:

Some to Saint Modan made their
vows,

Some to Saint Mary of the Lowes,
Some to the Holy Rood of Lisle,

Some to Our Lady of the Isle;

Each did his patron witness make
That he such pilgrimage would
take, 480

And monks should sing and bells
should toll,

All for the weal of Michael's soul.
While vows were ta'en and prayers
were prayed,

'T is said the noble dame, dis-
mayed,

Renounced for aye dark magic's
aid.

XXVIII

Nought of the bridal will I tell,
Which after in short space befell;
Nor how brave sons and daughters
fair

Blessed Teviot's Flower and Crans-
toun's heir:

After such dreadful scene 't were
vain 490

To wake the note of mirth again.
More meet it were to mark the
day

Of penitence and prayer divine,
When pilgrim-chiefs, in sad array,
Sought Melrose' holy shrine.

XXIX

With naked foot, and sackcloth
vest,

And arms enfolded on his breast,
Did every pilgrim go;

The standers-by might hear un-
eath

Footstep, or voice, or high-drawn
breath, 500

Through all the lengthened row:
No lordly look nor martial stride,

Gone was their glory, sunk their
 pride,
 Forgotten their renown;
 Silent and slow, like ghosts, they
 glide
 To the high altar's hallowed side,
 And there they knelt them down.
 Above the suppliant chieftains
 wave
 The banners of departed brave;
 Beneath the lettered stones were
 laid 510
 The ashes of their fathers dead;
 From many a garnished niche
 around
 Stern saints and tortured martyrs
 frowned.

XXX

And slow up the dim aisle afar,
 With sable cowl and scapular,
 And snow-white stoles, in order
 due,
 The holy fathers, two and two,
 In long procession came;
 Taper and host and book they bare,
 And holy banner, flourished fair
 With the Redeemer's name. 521
 Above the prostrate pilgrim band
 The mitred abbot stretched his
 hand,
 And blessed them as they
 kneeled;
 With holy cross he signed them all,
 And prayed they might be sage in
 hall
 And fortunate in field.
 Then mass was sung, and prayers
 were said,
 And solemn requiem for the dead;
 And bells tolled out their mighty
 peal 530
 For the departed spirit's weal;
 And ever in the office close
 The hymn of intercession rose;
 And far the echoing aisles prolong
 The awful burden of the song,
 DIES IRÆ, DIES ILLA,
 SOLVET SÆCLUM IN FAVILLA,
 While the pealing organ rung.
 Were it meet with sacred strain

To close my lay, so light and
 vain, 540
 Thus the holy fathers sung:

HYMN FOR THE DEAD

That day of wrath, that dreadful
 day,
 When heaven and earth shall pass
 away,
 What power shall be the sinner's
 stay?
 How shall he meet that dreadful
 day?

When, shrivelling like a parched
 scroll,
 The flaming heavens together roll,
 When louder yet, and yet more
 dread,
 Swells the high trump that wakes
 the dead! 549

O, on that day, that wrathful day,
 When man to judgment wakes
 from clay,
 Be THOU the trembling sinner's
 stay,
 Though heaven and earth shall
 pass away!

HUSHED is the harp—the Min-
 strel gone.
 And did he wander forth alone?
 Alone, in indigence and age,
 To linger out his pilgrimage?
 No: close beneath proud Newark's
 tower
 Arose the Minstrel's lowly bower,
 A simple hut; but there was seen
 The little garden hedged with
 green, 561
 The cheerful hearth, and lattice
 clean.
 There sheltered wanderers, by the
 blaze,
 Oft heard the tale of other days;
 For much he loved to ope his door,
 And give the aid he begged be-
 fore.

<p>So passed the winter's day; but still, When summer smiled on sweet Bowhill, And July's eve, with balmy breath, Waved the blue-bells on Newark heath, 570 When throstles sung in Harehead- shaw, And corn was green on Carter- haugh, And flourished, broad, Blackan- dro's oak,</p>	<p>The aged harper's soul awoke ! Then would he sing achievements high And circumstance of chivalry, Till the rapt traveller would stay, Forgetful of the closing day ; And noble youths, the strain to hear, 579 Forsook the hunting of the deer ; And Yarrow, as he rolled along, Bore burden to the Minstrel's song.</p>
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MARMION

A TALE OF FLODDEN FIELD

Alas ! that Scottish maid should sing
The combat where her lover fell !
That Scottish Bard should wake the string,
The triumph of our foes to tell !
LEYDEN'S Ode on Visiting Flodden.

TO THE

RIGHT HONORABLE HENRY, LORD MONTAGUE,
&c., &c., &c.,

THIS ROMANCE IS INSCRIBED BY
THE AUTHOR

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO
FIRST

TO WILLIAM STEWART ROSE,
ESQ.

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest

NOVEMBER'S sky is chill and
drear,
November's leaf is red and sear :
Late, gazing down the steepy linn
That hems our little garden in,

Low in its dark and narrow glen,
You scarce the rivulet might ken,
So thick the tangled greenwood
grew,
So feeble trilled the streamlet
through ;
Now, murmuring hoarse, and fre-
quent seen
Through bush and brier, no longer
green, 10
An angry brook, it sweeps the
glade,

Brawls over rock and wild cascade,
And, foaming brown with double speed,
Hurries its waters to the Tweed.

No longer autumn's glowing red
Upon our Forest hills is shed;
No more, beneath the evening beam,
Fair Tweed reflects their purple gleam.

Away hath passed the heather-bell
That bloomed so rich on Need-path-fell; ²⁰

Sallow his brow, and russet bare
Are now the sister-heights of Yair.
The sheep, before the pinching heaven,

To sheltered dale and down are driven,

Where yet some faded herbage pines,

And yet a watery sunbeam shines;
In meek despondency they eye
The withered sward and wintry sky,

And far beneath their summer hill

Stray sadly by Glenkinnon's rill.
The shepherd shifts his mantle's fold, ³¹

And wraps him closer from the cold:

His dogs no merry circles wheel,
But shivering follow at his heel;
A cowering glance they often cast,
As deeper moans the gathering blast.

My imps, though hardy, bold,
and wild,

As best befits the mountain child,
Feel the sad influence of the hour,
And wail the daisy's vanished flower, ⁴⁰

Their summer gambols tell, and mourn,

And anxious ask, — Will spring return,

And birds and lambs again be gay,
And blossoms clothe the hawthorn spray?

Yes, prattlers, yes. The daisy's flower

Again shall paint your summer bower;

Again the hawthorn shall supply
The garlands you delight to tie;
The lambs upon the lea shall bound, ⁴⁹

The wild birds carol to the round;
And while you frolic light as they,
Too short shall seem the summer day.

To mute and to material things
New life revolving summer brings;
The genial call dead Nature hears,
And in her glory reappears.

But oh! my country's wintry state
What second spring shall renovate?

What powerful call shall bid arise
The buried warlike and the wise,
The mind that thought for Britain's weal, ⁶¹

The hand that grasped the victor steel?

The vernal sun new life bestows
Even on the meanest flower that blows;

But vainly, vainly may he shine
Where Glory weeps o'er NELSON'S shrine,

And vainly pierce the solemn gloom

That shrouds, O PITT, thy hal-
lowed tomb!

Deep graved in every British heart,

Oh, never let those names depart! ⁷⁰

Say to your sons, — Lo, here his grave

Who victor died on Gadite wave!
To him, as to the burning levin,

Short, bright, resistless course was given;

Where'er his country's foes were
found,
Was heard the fated thunder's
sound,
Till burst the bolt on yonder shore,
Rolled, blazed, destroyed, — and
was no more.

Nor mourn ye less his perished
worth
Who bade the conqueror go forth,
And launched that thunderbolt of
war 81
On Egypt, Hafnia, Trafalgar;
Who, born to guide such high em-
prise,
For Britain's weal was early wise;
Alas! to whom the Almighty gave,
For Britain's sins, an early grave!
His worth who, in his mightiest
hour,
A bauble held the pride of power,
Spurned at the sordid lust of pelf,
And served his Albion for her-
self; 90
Who, when the frantic crowd
amain
Strained at subjection's bursting
rein,
O'er their wild mood full conquest
gained,
The pride, he would not crush, re-
strained,
Showed their fierce zeal a worthier
cause,
And brought the freeman's arm to
aid the freeman's laws.

Hadst thou but lived, though
stripped of power,
A watchman on the lonely tower,
Thy thrilling trump had roused
the land,
When fraud or danger were at
hand; 100
By thee, as by the beacon-light,
Our pilots had kept course aright;
As some proud column, though
alone,
Thy strength had propped the tot-
tering throne.

Now is the stately column broke,
The beacon-light is quenched in
smoke,
The trumpet's silver sound is
still,
The warder silent on the hill!

Oh, think, how to his latest day,
When Death, just hovering, claim-
ed his prey, 110
With Palinure's unaltered mood,
Firm at his dangerous post he
stood,
Each call for needful rest repelled,
With dying hand the rudder held,
Till, in his fall, with fateful sway,
The steerage of the realm gave
way!
Then, while on Britain's thousand
plains
One unpolluted church remains,
Whose peaceful bells ne'er sent
around
The bloody tocsin's maddening
sound, 120
But still, upon the hallowed day,
Convoke the swains to praise and
pray;
While faith and civil peace are
dear,
Grace this cold marble with a tear,
He who preserved them, PITT, lies
here.

Nor yet suppress the generous
sigh
Because his rival slumbers nigh,
Nor be thy *requiescat* dumb
Lest it be said o'er FOX's tomb;
For talents mourn, untimely lost,
When best employed and wanted
most; 131
Mourn genius high, and lore pro-
found,
And wit that loved to play, not
wound;
And all the reasoning powers di-
vine,
To penetrate, resolve, combine;
And feelings keen, and fancy's
glow,

They sleep with him who sleeps
below:

And, if thou mourn'st they could
not save

From error him who owns this
grave,

Be every harsher thought sup-
pressed, 140

And sacred be the last long rest.
Here, where the end of earthly
things

Lays heroes, patriots, bards, and
kings;

Where stiff the hand, and still the
tongue,

Of those who fought, and spoke,
and sung;

Here, where the fretted aisles pro-
long

The distant notes of holy song,
As if some angel spoke again,

'All peace on earth, good-will to
men;'

If ever from an English heart, 150
Oh, *here* let prejudice depart,

And, partial feeling cast aside,
Record that Fox a Briton died!

When Europe crouched to France's
yoke,

And Austria bent, and Prussia
broke,

And the firm Russian's purpose
brave

Was bartered by a timorous slave,
Even then dishonor's peace he
spurned,

The sullied olive-branch returned,
Stood for his country's glory
fast, 160

And nailed her colors to the mast!
Heaven, to reward his firmness,
gave

A portion in this honored grave,
And ne'er held marble in its trust

Of two such wondrous men the
dust.

With more than mortal powers
endowed,

How high they soared above the
crowd!

Theirs was no common party race,
Jostling by dark intrigue for
place;

Like fabled Gods, their mighty
war 170

Shook realms and nations in its
jar;

Beneath each banner proud to
stand,

Looked up the noblest of the land,
Till through the British world
were known

The names of PITT and FOX alone.
Spells of such force no wizard
grave

E'er framed in dark Thessalian
cave,

Though his could drain the ocean
dry,

And force the planets from the
sky.

These spells are spent, and, spent
with these, 180

The wine of life is on the lees,
Genius and taste and talent gone,

Forever tombed beneath the stone
Where — taming thought to human
pride! —

The mighty chiefs sleep side by
side.

Drop upon FOX's grave the tear,
'T will trickle to his rival's bier;

O'er PITT's the mournful requiem
sound,

And FOX's shall the notes re-
bound.

The solemn echo seems to
cry, — 190

'Here let their discord with them
die.

Speak not for those a separate
doom

Whom Fate made brothers in the
tomb;

But search the land, of living
men,

Where wilt thou find their like
again?'

Rest, ardent spirits, till the cries
Of dying nature bid you rise!

Not even your Britain's groans can
pierce

The leaden silence of your hearse ;
Then, oh, how impotent and
vain 200

This grateful tributary strain !
Though not unmarked from north-
ern clime,

Ye heard the Border Minstrel's
rhyme :

His Gothic harp has o'er you rung ;
The Bard you deigned to praise,
your deathless names has
sung.

Stay yet, illusion, stay a while,
My wildered fancy still beguile !
From this high theme how can I
part,

Ere half unloaded is my heart !
For all the tears e'er sorrow
drew, 210

And all the raptures fancy knew,
And all the keener rush of blood
That throbs through bard in bard-
like mood,

Were here a tribute mean and low,
Though all their mingled streams
could flow —

Woe, wonder, and sensation high,
In one spring-tide of ecstasy ! —
It will not be — it may not last —
The vision of enchantment's past :
Like frostwork in the morning
ray, 220

The fancy fabric melts away ;
Each Gothic arch, memorial-stone,
And long, dim, lofty aisle, are
gone ;

And, lingering last, deception dear,
The choir's high sounds die on my
ear.

Now slow return the lonely down,
The silent pastures bleak and
brown,

The farm begirt with copsewood
wild,

The gambols of each frolic child,
Mixing their shrill cries with the
tone 230

Of Tweed's dark waters rushing on.

Prompt on unequal tasks to run,
Thus Nature disciplines her son :
Meeter, she says, for me to stray,
And waste the solitary day

In plucking from yon fen the
reed,

And watch it floating down the
Tweed,

Or idly list the shrilling lay
With which the milkmaid cheers
her way.

Marking its cadence rise and
fail, 240

As from the field, beneath her
pail,

She trips it down the uneven
dale ;

Meeter for me, by yonder cairn,
The ancient shepherd's tale to
learn,

Though oft he stop in rustic fear,
Lest his old legends tire the ear
Of one who, in his simple mind,
May boast of book-learned taste
refined.

But thou, my friend, canst fitly
tell —

For few have read romance so
well — 250

How still the legendary lay
O'er poet's bosom holds its sway ;
How on the ancient minstrel strain
Time lays his palsied hand in
vain ;

And how our hearts at doughty
deeds,

By warriors wrought in steely
weeds,

Still throb for fear and pity's sake ;
As when the Champion of the
Lake

Enters Morgana's fated house,
Or in the Chapel Perilous, 260

Despising spells and demons' force,
Holds converse with the unburied
corse ;

Or when, Dame Ganore's grace to
move —

Alas, that lawless was their
love ! —

He sought proud Tarquin in his
den,
And freed full sixty knights; or
when,
A sinful man and unconfessed,
He took the Sangreal's holy quest,
And slumbering saw the vision
high
He might not view with waking
eye. 270

The mightiest chiefs of British
song
Scorned not such legends to pro-
long.
They gleam through Spenser's elfin
dream,
And mix in Milton's heavenly
theme;
And Dryden, in immortal strain,
Had raised the Table Round again,
But that a ribald king and court
Bade him toil on, to make them
sport;
Demanded for their niggard pay,
Fit for their souls, a looser lay, 280
Licentious satire, song, and play;
The world defrauded of the high
design,
Profaned the God-given strength,
and marred the lofty line.

Warmed by such names, well
may we then,
Though dwindled sons of little
men,
Essay to break a feeble lance
In the fair fields of old romance;
Or seek the moated castle's cell,
Where long through talisman and
spell,
While tyrants ruled and damsels
wept, 290
Thy Genius, Chivalry, hath slept.
There sound the harpings of the
North,
Till he awake and sally forth,
On venturous quest to prick again,
In all his arms, with all his train,
Shield, lance, and brand, and
plume, and scarf,

Fay, giant, dragon, squire, and
dwarf,
And wizard with his wand of
might,
And errant maid on palfrey white.
Around the Genius weave their
spells, 300
Pure Love, who scarce his passion
tells;
Mystery, half veiled and half re-
vealed;
And Honor, with his spotless
shield;
Attention, with fixed eye; and
Fear,
That loves the tale she shrinks to
hear;
And gentle Courtesy; and Faith,
Unchanged by sufferings, time, or
death;
And Valor, lion-mettled lord,
Leaning upon his own good sword.

Well has thy fair achievement
shown 310
A worthy meed may thus be
won:
Ytene's oaks — beneath whose
shade
Their theme the merry minstrels
made,
Of Ascapart, and Bevis bold,
And that Red King, who, while of
old
Through Boldrewood the chase he
led,
By his loved huntsman's arrow
bled —
Ytene's oaks have heard again
Renewed such legendary strain;
For thou hast sung, how he of
Gaul, 320
That Amadis so famed in hall,
For Oriana, foiled in fight
The Necromancer's felon might;
And well in modern verse hast
wove
Partenopex's mystic love:
Hear, then, attentive to my lay,
A knightly tale of Albion's elder
day.

CANTO FIRST

THE CASTLE

I

DAY set on Norham's castled steep,
 And Tweed's fair river, broad and deep,
 And Cheviot's mountains lone;
 The battled towers, the donjon keep,
 The loophole grates where captives weep,
 The flanking walls that round it sweep,
 In yellow lustre shone.
 The warriors on the turrets high,
 Moving athwart the evening sky,
 Seemed forms of giant height;¹⁰
 Their armor, as it caught the rays,
 Flashed back again the western blaze,
 In lines of dazzling light.

II

Saint George's banner, broad and gay,
 Now faded, as the fading ray
 Less bright, and less, was flung;
 The evening gale had scarce the power
 To wave it on the donjon tower,
 So heavily it hung.
 The scouts had parted on their search,²⁰
 The castle gates were barred;
 Above the gloomy portal arch,
 Timing his footsteps to a march,
 The warder kept his guard,
 Low humming, as he paced along,
 Some ancient Border gathering song.

III

A distant trampling sound he hears;
 He looks abroad, and soon appears,
 O'er Horncliff-hill, a plump of spears

Beneath a pennon gay;³⁰
 A horseman, darting from the crowd
 Like lightning from a summer cloud,
 Spurs on his mettled courser proud,
 Before the dark array.
 Beneath the sable palisade
 That closed the castle barricade,
 His bugle-horn he blew;
 The warder hasted from the wall,
 And warned the captain in the hall,
 For well the blast he knew;⁴⁰
 And joyfully that knight did call
 To sewer, squire, and seneschal.

IV

'Now broach ye a pipe of Malvoisie,
 Bring pasties of the doe,
 And quickly make the entrance free,
 And bid my heralds ready be,
 And every minstrel sound his glee,
 And all our trumpets blow;
 And, from the platform, spare ye not
 To fire a noble salvo-shot;⁵⁰
 Lord Marmion waits below!' ⁵⁰
 Then to the castle's lower ward
 Sped forty yeomen tall,
 The iron-studded gates unbarred,
 Raised the portcullis' ponderous guard,
 The lofty palisade unsparred,
 And let the drawbridge fall.

V

Along the bridge Lord Marmion rode,
 Proudly his red-roan charger trode,⁵⁹
 His helm hung at the saddle bow;
 Well by his visage you might know
 He was a stalworth knight and keen,

And had in many a battle been ;
The scar on his brown cheek re-
vealed

A token true of Bosworth field ;
His eyebrow dark and eye of
fire

Showed spirit proud and prompt
to ire,

Yet lines of thought upon his
cheek

Did deep design and counsel speak.
His forehead, by his casque worn
bare, ⁷⁰

His thick moustache and curly
hair,

Coal-black, and grizzled here and
there,

But more through toil than age,
His square - turned joints and
strength of limb,

Showed him no carpet knight so
trim,

But in close fight a champion
grim,

In camps a leader sage.

VI

Well was he armed from head to
heel,

In mail and plate of Milan steel ;
But his strong helm, of mighty
cost, ⁸⁰

Was all with burnished gold em-
bossed.

Amid the plumage of the crest
A falcon hovered on her nest,
With wings outspread and for-
ward breast

E'en such a falcon, on his shield,
Soared sable in an azure field :
The golden legend bore aright,
' Who checks at me, to death is
dight.'

Blue was the charger's brodered
rein ;

Blue ribbons decked his arching
mane ; ⁹⁰

The knightly housing's ample
fold

Was velvet blue and trapped with
gold.

VII

Behind him rode two gallant
squires,

Of noble name and knightly sires :
They burned the gilded spurs to
claim,

For well could each a war-horse
tame,

Could draw the bow, the sword
could sway,

And lightly bear the ring away ;
Nor less with courteous precepts
stored,

Could dance in hall, and carve at
board, ¹⁰⁰

And frame love - ditties passing
rare,

And sing them to a lady fair.

VIII

Four men-at-arms came at their
backs,

With halbert, bill, and battle-axe ;
They bore Lord Marmion's lance
so strong,

And led his sumpter-mules along,
And ambling palfrey, when at
need

Him listed ease his battle-steed.

The last and trustiest of the four
On high his forky pennon bore ;
Like swallow's tail in shape and
hue, ¹¹¹

Fluttered the streamer glossy
blue,

Where, blazoned sable, as before,
The towering falcon seemed to
soar.

Last, twenty yeomen, two and
two,

In hosen black and jerkins blue,
With falcons brodered on each
breast,

Attended on their lord's behest.

Each, chosen for an archer good,
Knew hunting-craft by lake or
wood ; ¹²⁰

Each one a six-foot bow could
bend,

And far a cloth-yard shaft could
send ;

Each held a boar-spear tough and strong,
And at their belts their quivers rung.
Their dusty palfreys and array
Showed they had marched a weary way.

IX

'T is meet that I should tell you now,
How fairly armed, and ordered how,

The soldiers of the guard, ¹²⁹
With musket, pike, and morion,
To welcome noble Marmion,
Stood in the castle-yard;
Minstrels and trumpeters were there,
The gunner held his linstock yare,

For welcome-shot prepared:
Entered the train, and such a clang
As then through all his turrets rang
Old Norham never heard.

X

The guards their morrice-pikes advanced, ¹³⁹
The trumpets flourished brave,
The cannon from the ramparts glanced,
And thundering welcome gave.
A blithe salute, in martial sort,
The minstrels well might sound,
For, as Lord Marmion crossed the court,
He scattered angels round.
'Welcome to Norham, Marmion!
Stout heart and open hand!
Well dost thou brook thy gallant roan, ¹⁴⁹
Thou flower of English land!'

XI

Two pursuivants, whom tabards deck,
With silver scutcheon round the neck,

Stood on the steps of stone,
By which you reach the donjon gate,
And there, with herald pomp and state,

They hailed Lord Marmion:
They hailed him Lord of Fontenaye,

Of Lutterward, and Scrivelbaye,
Of Tamworth tower and town;
And he, their courtesy to requite,
Gave them a chain of twelve marks' weight, ¹⁶¹

All as he lighted down.
'Now, largesse, largesse, Lord Marmion,
Knight of the crest of gold!
A blazoned shield, in battle won,
Ne'er guarded heart so bold.'

XII

They marshalled him to the castle-hall,

Where the guests stood all aside,
And loudly flourished the trumpet-call,

And the heralds loudly cried,—
'Room, lordlings, room for Lord Marmion, ¹⁷¹

With the crest and helm of gold!
Full well we know the trophies won

In the lists at Cottiswold:
There, vainly Ralph de Wilton strove

'Gainst Marmion's force to stand;

To him he lost his lady-love,
And to the king his land.
Ourselves beheld the listed field,

A sight both sad and fair;
We saw Lord Marmion pierce shield,

And saw his sad
We saw the victor

He wear
And on

Hi

For him who conquered in the
right,
Marmion of Fontenaye!' 190

XIII

Then stepped, to meet that noble
lord,

Sir Hugh the Heron bold,
Baron of Twisell and of Ford,
And Captain of the Hold;
He led Lord Marmion to the deas,
Raised o'er the pavement high,
And placed him in the upper
place—

They feasted full and high:
The whiles a Northern harper
rude 199

Chanted a rhyme of deadly feud,
'How the fierce Thirwalls, and
Ridleys all,

Stout Willimondswick,
And Hardriding Dick,
And Hughie of Hawdon, and
Will o' the Wall,

Have set on Sir Albany Feather-
stonhaugh,

And taken his life at the Dead-
man's-shaw.'

Scantly Lord Marmion's ear could
brook

The harper's barbarous lay,
Yet much he praised the pains he
took, 209

And well those pains did pay;
For lady's suit and minstrel's
strain

By knight should ne'er be heard
in vain.

XIV

Now, good Lord Marmion,' Heron
says,

'our fair courtesy,
'hide some little space

ower with me.

en your arms

—horse

Or feat of arms befell. 220
The Scots can rein a mettled
steed,

And love to couch a spear;—
Saint George! a stirring life they
lead

That have such neighbors near!
Then stay with us a little space,
Our Northern wars to learn;
I pray you for your lady's grace!'
Lord Marmion's brow grew
stern.

XV

The captain marked his altered
look, 229

And gave the squire the sign;
A mighty wassail-bowl he took,
And crowned it high with wine.

'Now pledge me here, Lord Mar-
mion;

But first I pray thee fair.
Where hast thou left that page of
thine

That used to serve thy cup of
wine,

Whose beauty was so rare?
When last in Raby-towers we met,
The boy I closely eyed,
And often marked his cheeks were
wet 240

With tears he fain would hide.
His was no rugged horse-boy's
hand,
To burnish shield or sharpen
brand,

Or saddle battle-steed,
But meeter seemed for lady fair,
To fan her cheek, or curl her
hair,

Or through embroidery, rich and
rare,

The slender silk to lead;
His skin was fair, his ringlets
gold,

His bosom—when he sighed, 250
The russet doublet's rugged fold
Could scarce repel its pride!
Say, hast thou given that lovely
youth

To serve in lady's bower?

Or was the gentle page, in sooth,
A gentle paramour?'

XVI

Lord Marmion ill could brook such
jest;

He rolled his kindling eye,
With pain his rising wrath sup-
pressed,

Yet made a calm reply: 260
'That boy thou thought so goodly
fair,

He might not brook the Northern
air.

More of his fate if thou wouldst
learn,

I left him sick in Lindisfarne.

Enough of him. — But, Heron, say,
Why does thy lovely lady gay
Disdain to grace the hall to-day?

Or has that dame, so fair and sage,
Gone on some pious pilgrim-
age?' —

He spoke in covert scorn, for
fame 270

Whispered light tales of Heron's
dame.

XVII

Unmarked, at least unrecked, the
taunt,

Careless the knight replied:

'No bird whose feathers gayly
flaunt

Delights in cage to bide;
Norham is grim and grated close,
Hemmed in by battlement and
fosse,

And many a darksome tower,
And better loves my lady bright
To sit in liberty and light 280

In fair Queen Margaret's bower.
We hold our greyhound in our
hand,

Our falcon on our glove,
But where shall we find leash or
band

For dame that loves to rove?
Let the wild falcon soar her swing,
She'll stoop when she has tired
her wing.' —

XVIII

'Nay, if with Royal James's bride
The lovely Lady Heron bide,

Behold me here a messenger, 290
Your tender greetings prompt to
bear;

For, to the Scottish court ad-
dressed,

I journey at our king's behest,
And pray you, of your grace, pro-
vide

For me and mine a trusty guide.
I have not ridden in Scotland since
James backed the cause of that
mock prince,

Warbeck, that Flemish counter-
feit,

Who on the gibbet paid the cheat.
Then did I march with Surrey's
power, 300

What time we razed old Aytoun
tower.'

XIX

'For such-like need, my lord, I
trow,

Norham can find you guides enow;
For here be some have pricked as
far

On Scottish ground as to Dun-
bar,

Have drunk the monks of Saint
Bothan's ale,

And driven the beeves of Lauder-
dale,

Harried the wives of Greenlaw's
goods,

And given them light to set their
hoods.' —

XX

'Now, in good sooth,' Lord Mar-
mion cried, 310

'Were I in warlike wise to ride,
A better guard I would not lack
Than your stout forayers at my
back;

But as in form of peace I go,
A friendly messenger, to know,
Why, through all Scotland, near
and far,

Their king is mustering troops
for war,
The sight of plundering Border
spears
Might justify suspicious fears,
And deadly feud or thirst of
spoil 320
Break out in some unseemly broil.
A herald were my fitting guide;
Or friar, sworn in peace to bide;
Or pardoner, or travelling priest,
Or strolling pilgrim, at the least.'

XXI

The captain mused a little space,
And passed his hand across his
face. —
'Fain would I find the guide you
want,
But ill may spare a pursuivant,
The only men that safe can
ride 330
Mine errands on the Scottish side:
And though a bishop built this
fort,
Few holy brethren here resort;
Even our good chaplain, as I
ween,
Since our last siege we have not
seen.
The mass he might not sing or say
Upon one stinted meal a-day;
So, safe he sat in Durham aisle,
And prayed for our success the
while,
Our Norham vicar, woe betide, 340
Is all too well in case to ride;
The priest of Shoreswood — he
could rein
The wildest war-horse in your
train,
But then no spearman in the hall
Will sooner swear, or stab, or
brawl,
Friar John of Tillmouth were the
man;
A blithesome brother at the can,
A welcome guest in hall and
bower,
He knows each castle, town, and
tower.

In which the wine and ale is
good, 350
'Twixt Newcastle and Holy-Rood.
But that good man, as ill befalls,
Hath seldom left our castle walls,
Since, on the vigil of Saint Bede,
In evil hour he crossed the Tweed,
To teach Dame Alison her creed.
Old Bughtrig found him with his
wife,
And John, an enemy to strife,
Sans frock and hood, fled for his
life.
The jealous churl hath deeply
swore 360
That, if again he venture o'er,
He shall shrieve penitent no
more.
Little he loves such risks, I know,
Yet in your guard perchance will
go.'

XXII

Young Selby, at the fair hall-
board,
Carved to his uncle and that lord,
And reverently took up the word:
'Kind uncle, woe were we each
one,
If harm should hap to brother
John.
He is a man of mirthful speech, 370
Can many a game and gambol
teach;
Full well at tables can he play,
And sweep at bowls the stake
away.
None can a lustier carol bawl,
The needfullest among us all,
When time hangs heavy in the
hall,
And snow comes thick at Christ-
mas tide,
And we can neither hunt nor ride
A foray on the Scottish side.
The vowed revenge of Bughtrig
rude 380
May end in worse than loss of
hood.
Let Friar John in safety still
In chimney-corner snore his fill,

Roast hissing crabs, or flagons
 swill;
 Last night, to Norham there came
 one
 Will better guide Lord Mar-
 mion.' —
 'Nephew,' quoth Heron, 'by my
 fay,
 Well hast thou spoke; say forth
 thy say.' —

XXIII

'Here is a holy Palmer come,
 From Salem first, and last from
 Rome; 390
 One that hath kissed the blessed
 tomb,
 And visited each holy shrine
 In Araby and Palestine;
 On hills of Armenie hath been,
 Where Noah's ark may yet be
 seen;
 By that Red Sea, too, hath he
 trod,
 Which parted at the Prophet's
 rod;
 In Sinai's wilderness he saw
 The Mount where Israel heard the
 law,
 Mid thunder-dint, and flashing
 levin, 400
 And shadows, mists, and darkness,
 given.
 He shows Saint James's cockle-
 shell,
 Of fair Montserrat, too, can tell;
 And of that Grot where Olives
 nod,
 Where, darling of each heart and
 eye,
 From all the youth of Sicily,
 Saint Rosalie retired to God.

XXIV

'To stout Saint George of Norwich
 merry,
 Saint Thomas, too, of Canterbury,
 Cuthbert of Durham and Saint
 Bede, 410
 For his sins' pardon hath he
 prayed.

He knows the passes of the North,
 And seeks far shrines beyond the
 Forth;
 Little he eats, and long will wake,
 And drinks but of the stream or
 lake.
 This were a guide o'er moor and
 dale;
 But when our John hath quaffed
 his ale,
 As little as the wind that blows,
 And warms itself against his nose,
 Kens he, or cares, which way he
 goes.' — 420

XXV

'Gramercy!' quoth Lord Mar-
 mion,
 'Full loath were I that Friar John,
 That venerable man, for me
 Were placed in fear or jeopardy:
 If this same Palmer will me lead
 From hence to Holy-Rood,
 Like his good saint, I'll pay his
 meed,
 Instead of cockle-shell or bead,
 With angels fair and good.
 I love such holy rambles; still 430
 They know to charm a weary hill
 With song, romance, or lay:
 Some jovial tale, or glee, or jest,
 Some lying legend, at the least,
 They bring to cheer the way.' —

XXVI

'Ah! noble sir,' young Selby said,
 And finger on his lip he laid,
 'This man knows much, perchance
 e'en more
 Than he could learn by holy lore.
 Still to himself he's muttering, 440
 And shrinks as at some unseen
 thing.
 Last night we listened at his cell;
 Strange sounds we heard, and,
 sooth to tell,
 He murmured on till morn, how-
 e'er
 No living mortal could be near.
 Sometimes I thought I heard it
 plain,

As other voices spoke again.
 I cannot tell — I like it not —
 Friar John hath told us it is wrote,
 No conscience clear and void of
 wrong 450
 Can rest awake and pray so long.
 Himself still sleeps before his
 beads
 Have marked ten aves and two
 creeds.' —

XXVII

'Let pass,' quoth Marmion; 'by
 my fay,
 This man shall guide me on my
 way,
 Although the great arch-fiend and
 he
 Had sworn themselves of com-
 pany.
 So please you, gentle youth, to call
 This Palmer to the castle-hall.'
 The summoned Palmer came in
 place; 460
 His sable cowl o'erhung his face;
 In his black mantle was he clad,
 With Peter's keys, in cloth of red,
 On his broad shoulders wrought;
 The scallop shell his cap did deck;
 The crucifix around his neck
 Was from Loretto brought;
 His sandals were with travel tore,
 Staff, budget, bottle, scrip, he
 wore;
 The faded palm-branch in his
 hand 470
 Showed pilgrim from the Holy
 Land.

XXVIII

Whenas the Palmer came in hall,
 Nor lord nor knight was there
 more tall,
 Or had a statelier step withal,
 Or looked more high and keen;
 For no saluting did he wait,
 But strode across the hall of
 state,
 And fronted Marmion where he
 sate,
 As he his peer had been.

But his gaunt frame was worn with
 toil; 480
 His cheek was sunk, alas the
 while!
 And when he struggled at a smile
 His eye looked haggard wild:
 Poor wretch, the mother that him
 bare,
 If she had been in presence there,
 In his wan face and sunburnt hair
 She had not known her child.
 Danger, long travel, want, or woe,
 Soon change the form that best we
 know —
 For deadly fear can time out-
 go, 490
 And blanch at once the hair;
 Hard toil can roughen form and
 face,
 And want can quench the eye's
 bright grace,
 Nor does old age a wrinkle trace
 More deeply than despair.
 Happy whom none of these be-
 fall,
 But this poor Palmer knew them
 all.

XXIX

Lord Marmion then his boon did
 ask;
 The Palmer took on him the task,
 So he would march with morning
 tide, 500
 To Scottish court to be his guide.
 'But I have solemn vows to pay,
 And may not linger by the way,
 To fair Saint Andrew's bound.
 Within the ocean-cave to pray,
 Where good Saint Rule his holy
 lay,
 From midnight to the dawn of
 day,
 Sung to the billows' sound;
 Thence to Saint Fillan's blessed
 well,
 Whose spring can frenzied dreams
 dispel, 510
 And the crazed brain restore.
 Saint Mary grant that cave or
 spring

Could back to peace my bosom
bring,
Or bid it throb no more!

XXX

And now the midnight draught of
sleep,
Where wine and spices richly
steep,
In massive bowl of silver deep,
The page presents on knee.
Lord Marmion drank a fair good
rest,
The captain pledged his noble
guest, 520
The cup went through among the
rest,

Who drained it merrily;
Alone the Palmer passed it by,
Though Selby pressed him cour-
teously.

This was a sign the feast was
o'er;

It hushed the merry wassail roar,
The minstrels ceased to sound.
Soon in the castle nought was
heard

But the slow footstep of the guard
Pacing his sober round. 530

XXXI

With early dawn Lord Marmion
rose:

And first the chapel doors unclosed;
Then, after morning rites were
done—

A hasty mass from Friar John—
And knight and squire had broke
their fast

On rich substantial repast,
Lord Marmion's bugles blew to
horse.

Then came the stirrup-cup in
course:

Between the baron and his host,
No point of courtesy was lost; 540
High thanks were by Lord Mar-
mion paid,

Solemn excuse the captain made,
Till, filing from the gate, had
passed

That noble train, their lord the
last.

Then loudly rung the trumpet call;
Thundered the cannon from the
wall,

And shook the Scottish shore;
Around the castle eddied slow
Volumes of smoke as white as
snow

And hid its turrets hoar, 550
Till they rolled forth upon the air,
And met the river breezes there,
Which gave again the prospect
fair.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO SECOND

TO THE REV. JOHN MARRIOT, A.M.

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest

THE scenes are desert now and
bare,

Where flourished once a forest
fair,

When these waste glens with copse
were lined,

And peopled with the hart and
hind.

Yon thorn—perchance whose
prickly spears

Have fenced him for three hun-
dred years,

While fell around his green com-
peers—

Yon lonely thorn, would he could
tell

The changes of his parent dell,
Since he, so gray and stubborn
now, 10

Waved in each breeze a sapling
bough!

Would he could tell how deep the
shade

A thousand mingled branches
made;

How broad the shadows of the oak,
How clung the rowan to the rock,
And through the foliage showed
his head,

With narrow leaves and berries
red;
What pines on every mountain
sprung, ¹⁸
O'er every dell what birches hung,
In every breeze what aspens shook,
What alders shaded every brook !

'Here, in my shade,' methinks
he'd say,
'The mighty stag at noontide lay;
The wolf I've seen, a fiercer
game, —
The neighboring dingle bears his
name, —
With lurching step around me
prowl,
And stop, against the moon to
howl;
The mountain-boar, on battle set,
His tusks upon my stem would
whet;
While doe, and roe, and red-deer
good, ³⁰
Have bounded by through gay
greenwood.
Then oft from Newark's riven
tower
Sallied a Scottish monarch's
power:
A thousand vassals mustered
round,
With horse, and hawk, and horn,
and hound;
And I might see the youth intent
Guard every pass with crossbow
bent;
And through the brake the rangers
stalk,
And falconers hold the ready
hawk; ³⁹
And foresters, in greenwood trim,
Lead in the leash the gazehounds
grim,
Attentive, as the bratchet's bay
From the dark covert drove the
prey,
To slip them as he broke away.
The startled quarry bounds amain,
As fast the gallant greyhounds
strain;

Whistles the arrow from the bow,
Answers the harquebuss below;
While all the rocking hills reply
To hoof-clang, hound, and hunters'
cry, ⁵⁰
And bugles ringing lightsomely.'

Of such proud huntings many
tales
Yet linger in our lonely dales,
Up pathless Ettrick and on Yar-
row,
Where erst the outlaw drew his
arrow.
But not more blithe that sylvan
court,
Than we have been at humbler
sport;
Though small our pomp and mean
our game,
Our mirth, dear Marriot, was the
same.
Remember'st thou my greyhounds
true? ⁶⁰
O'erholt or hill there never flew,
From slip or leash there never
sprang,
More fleet of foot or sure of fang.
Nor dull, between each merry
chase,
Passed by the intermitted space;
For we had fair resource in store,
In Classic and in Gothic lore;
We marked each memorable scene,
And held poetic talk between;
Nor hill, nor brook, we paced
along, ⁷⁰
But had its legend or its song.
All silent now — for now are still
Thy bowers, untenanted Bowhill!
No longer from thy mountains dun
The yeoman hears the well-known
gun,
And while his honest heart glows
warm
At thought of his paternal farm,
Round to his mates a brimmer fills,
And drinks, 'The Chieftain of the
Hills!'
No fairy forms, in Yarrow's bow-
ers, ⁸⁰

Trip o'er the walks or tend the
flowers,

Fair as the elves whom Janet saw
By moonlight dance on Carter-
haugh ;

No youthful Baron's left to grace
The Forest-Sheriff's lonely chace,
And ape, in manly step and tone,
The majesty of Oberon :

And she is gone whose lovely face
Is but her least and lowest grace ;
Though if to Sylphid Queen 't were
given 90

To show our earth the charms of
heaven,

She could not glide along the air
With form more light or face more
fair.

No more the widow's deafened ear
Grows quick that lady's step to
hear :

At noontide she expects her not,
Nor busies her to trim the cot ;
Pensive she turns her humming
wheel,

Or pensive cooks her orphans'
meal,

Yet blesses, ere she deals their
bread, 100

The gentle hand by which they're
fed.

From Yair — which hills so
closely bind,

Scarce can the Tweed his passage
find,

Though much he fret, and chafe,
and toil,

Till all his eddying currents boil —
Her long-descended lord is gone,
And left us by the stream alone.

And much I miss those sportive
boys,

Companions of my mountain joys,
Just at the age 'twixt boy and
youth, 110

When thought is speech, and
speech is truth.

Close to my side with what delight
They pressed to hear of Wallace
wight,

When, pointing to his airy mound,
I called his ramparts holy ground !
Kindled their brows to hear me
speak ;

And I have smiled, to feel my
cheek,

Despite the difference of our years,
Return again the glow of theirs.

Ah, happy boys ! such feelings
pure, 120

They will not, cannot long endure ;
Condemned to stem the world's
rude tide,

You may not linger by the side ;
For Fate shall thrust you from the
shore

And Passion ply the sail and oar.
Yet cherish the remembrance still
Of the lone mountain and the
rill ;

For trust, dear boys, the time will
come,

When fiercer transport shall be
dumb,

And you will think right fre-
quently, 130

But, well I hope, without a sigh,
On the free hours that we have
spent

Together on the brown hill's bent.

When, musing on companions
gone,

We doubly feel ourselves alone,
Something, my friend, we yet may
gain ;

There is a pleasure in this pain :
It soothes the love of lonely rest,
Deep in each gentler heart im-
pressed.

'T is silent amid worldly toils, 140
And stifled soon by mental broils ;

But, in a bosom thus prepared,
Its still small voice is often heard,
Whispering a mingled sentiment
'Twixt resignation and content.

Oft in my mind such thoughts
awake

By lone Saint Mary's silent lake :
Thou know'st it well, — nor fen nor
sedge

Pollute the pure lake's crystal
edge;
Abrupt and sheer, the mountains
sink 150

At once upon the level brink,
And just a trace of silver sand
Marks where the water meets the
land.

Far in the mirror, bright and blue,
Each hill's huge outline you may
view;

Shaggy with heath, but lonely
bare,

Nor tree, nor bush, nor brake is
there,

Save where of land yon slender
line

Bears thwart the lake the scattered
pine.

Yet even this nakedness has
power, 160

And aids the feeling of the hour:
Nor thicket, dell, nor copse you
spy,

Where living thing concealed
might lie;

Nor point retiring hides a dell

Where swain or woodman lone
might dwell;

There's nothing left to fancy's
guess,

You see that all is loneliness:

And silence aids — though the
steep hills 168

Send to the lake a thousand rills;

In summer tide so soft they weep,

The sound but lulls the ear asleep;

Your horse's hoof-tread sounds too
rude,

So stilly is the solitude.

Nought living meets the eye or
ear,

But well I ween the dead are
near;

For though, in feudal strife, a foe

Hath laid Our Lady's chapel low,

Yet still, beneath the hallowed
soil,

The peasant rests him from his
toil, 179

And dying bids his bones be laid
Where erst his simple fathers
prayed.

If age had tamed the passions'
strife,

And fate had cut my ties to life,
Here have I thought 't were sweet
to dwell,

And rear again the chaplain's cell,
Like that same peaceful hermitage,
Where Milton longed to spend his
age.

'T were sweet to mark the setting
day

On Bourhope's lonely top decay,
And, as it faint and feeble died 190

On the broad lake and mountain's
side,

To say, 'Thus pleasures fade away;
Youth, talents, beauty, thus decay,
And leave us dark, forlorn, and
gray;

Then gaze on Dryhope's ruined
tower,

And think on Yarrow's faded
Flower;

And when that mountain-sound I
heard,

Which bids us be for storm pre-
pared,

The distant rustling of his wings,
As up his force the Tempest brings,
'T were sweet, ere yet his terrors
rave, 201

To sit upon the Wizard's grave,
That Wizard Priest's whose bones
are thrust

From company of holy dust;
On which no sunbeam ever
shines —

So superstition's creed divines —
Thence view the lake with sullen
roar

Heave her broad billows to the
shore;

And mark the wild-swans mount
the gale,

Spread wide through mist their
snowy sail, 210

And ever stoop again, to lave

Their bosoms on the surging wave;
Then, when against the driving
hail

No longer might my plaid avail,
Back to my lonely home retire,
And light my lamp and trim my
fire;

There ponder o'er some mystic lay,
Till the wild tale had all its sway,
And, in the bittern's distant shriek,
I heard unearthly voices speak,
And thought the Wizard Priest
was come 221

To claim again his ancient home!
And bade my busy fancy range,
To frame him fitting shape and
strange,
Till from the task my brow I
cleared,
And smiled to think that I had
feared.

But chief 'twere sweet to think
such life —
Though but escape from fortune's
strife —

Something most matchless good
and wise,

A great and grateful sacrifice, 230
And deem each hour to musing
given

A step upon the road to heaven.

Yet him whose heart is ill at
ease

Such peaceful solitudes displease;
He loves to drown his bosom's jar
Amid the elemental war:

And my black Palmer's choice had
been

Some ruder and more savage scene,
Like that which frowns round dark
Lochskene.

There eagles scream from isle to
shore; 240

Down all the rocks the torrents
roar;

O'er the black waves incessant
driven,

Dark mists infect the summer
heaven;

Through the rude barriers of the
lake,

Away its hurrying waters break,
Faster and whiter dash and curl,
Till down yon dark abyss they
hurl.

Rises the fog-smoke white as snow,
Thunders the viewless stream be-
low, 249

Diving, as if condemned to lave
Some demon's subterranean cave,
Who, prisoned by enchanter's
spell,

Shakes the dark rock with groan
and yell.

And well that Palmer's form and
mien

Had suited with the stormy scene,
Just on the edge, straining his ken
To view the bottom of the den,
Where, deep deep down, and far
within,

Toils with the rocks the roaring
linu;

Then, issuing forth one foamy
wave, 260

And wheeling round the Giant's
Grave,

White as the snowy charger's tail,
Drives down the pass of Moffat-
dale.

Marriot, thy harp, on Isis strung,
To many a Border theme has
rung:

Then list to me, and thou shalt
know

Of this mysterious Man of Woe.

CANTO SECOND

THE CONVENT

I

THE breeze which swept away the
smoke

Round Norham Castle rolled,
When all the loud artillery spoke
With lightning-flash and thunder-
stroke,

As Marmion left the hold, —
 It curled not Tweed alone, that
 breeze,
 For, far upon Northumbrian seas,
 It freshly blew and strong,
 Where, from high Whitby's clois-
 tered pile,
 Bound to Saint Cuthbert's Holy
 Isle, 10

It bore a bark along.
 Upon the gale she stooped her
 side,
 And bounded o'er the swelling
 tide,

As she were dancing home;
 The merry seamen laughed to see
 Their gallant ship so lustily
 Furrow the green sea-foam.
 Much joyed they in their honored
 freight;
 For on the deck, in chair of state,
 The Abbess of Saint Hilda placed,
 With five fair nuns, the galley
 graced. 21

II

'Twas sweet to see these holy
 maids,
 Like birds escaped to greenwood
 shades,

Their first flight from the cage,
 How timid, and how curious too,
 For all to them was strange and
 new,
 And all the common sights they
 view

Their wonderment engage.
 One eyed the shrouds and swelling
 sail,

With many a benedicite; 30
 One at the rippling surge grew
 pale,

And would for terror pray,
 Then shrieked because the sea-dog
 nigh
 His round black head and spark-
 ling eye

Reared o'er the foaming spray;
 And one would still adjust her
 veil,
 Disordered by the summer gale,

Perchance lest some more worldly
 eye

Her dedicated charms might spy,
 Perchance because such action
 graced 40

Her fair-turned arm and slender
 waist.

Light was each simple bosom
 there,

Save two, who ill might pleasure
 share,—

The Abbess and the Novice Clare.

III

The Abbess was of noble blood,
 But early took the veil and hood,
 Ere upon life she cast a look,
 Or knew the world that she for-
 sook.

Fair too she was, and kind had
 been

As she was fair, but ne'er had
 seen 50

For her a timid lover sigh,
 Nor knew the influence of her
 eye.

Love to her ear was but a name,
 Combined with vanity and shame;
 Her hopes, her fears, her joys,
 were all

Bounded within the cloister wall;
 The deadliest sin her mind could
 reach

Was of monastic rule the breach;
 And her ambition's highest aim
 To emulate Saint Hilda's fame. 60
 For this she gave her ample dower
 To raise the convent's eastern
 tower;

For this, with carving rare and
 quaint,

She decked the chapel of the saint,
 And gave the relic-shrine of cost,
 With ivory and gems embossed.
 The poor her convent's bounty
 blest,

The pilgrim in its halls found rest.

IV

Black was her garb, her rigid rule
 Reformed on Benedictine school;

Her cheek was pale, her form was
spare; 71

Vigils and penitence austere
Had early quenched the light of
youth:

But gentle was the dame, in sooth;
Though, vain of her religious
sway,

She loved to see her maids obey,
Yet nothing stern was she in cell,
And the nuns loved their Abbess
well.

Sad was this voyage to the dame;
Summoned to Lindisfarne, she
came, 80

There, with Saint Cuthbert's Abbot
old

And Tynemouth's Prioress, to
hold

A chapter of Saint Benedict,
For inquisition stern and strict
On two apostates from the faith,
And, if need were, to doom to
death.

V

Naught say I here of Sister Clare,
Save this, that she was young and
fair;

As yet a novice unprofessed,
Lovely and gentle, but distressed.
She was betrothed to one now
dead, 91

Or worse, who had dishonored
fled.

Her kinsmen bade her give her
hand

To one who loved her for her land;
Herself, almost heart-broken
now,

Was bent to take the vestal vow,
And shroud within Saint Hilda's
gloom

Her blasted hopes and withered
bloom.

VI

She sate upon the galley's prow,
And seemed to mark the waves
below; 100

Nay, seemed, so fired her look and
eye,

To count them as they glided by.
She saw them not — 't was seem-
ing all —

Far other scene her thoughts re-
call, —

A sun-scorched desert, waste and
bare,

Nor waves nor breezes murmured
there;

There saw she where some care-
less hand

O'er a dead corpse had heaped
the sand,

To hide it till the jackals come 109
To tear it from the scanty tomb. —

See what a woful look was given,
As she raised up her eyes to
heaven!

VII

Lovely, and gentle, and dis-
tressed —

These charms might tame the
fiercest breast:

Harpers have sung and poets told
That he, in fury uncontrolled,
The shaggy monarch of the wood,
Before a virgin, fair and good,
Hath pacified his savage mood. 119

But passions in the human frame
Oft put the lion's rage to shame;
And jealousy, by dark intrigue,
With sordid avarice in league,
Had practised with their bowl and
knife

Against the mourner's harmless
life.

This crime was charged 'gainst
those who lay

Prisoned in Cuthbert's islet gray.

VIII

And now the vessel skirts the
strand

Of mountainous Northumberland;
Towns, towers, and halls succes-
sive rise, 130

And catch the nuns' delighted
eyes.

Monk - Wearmouth soon behind
them lay,

And Tynemouth's priory and bay;
 They marked amid her trees the
 hall
 Of lofty Seaton-Delaval;
 They saw the Blythe and Wans-
 beck floods
 Rush to the sea through sounding
 woods;
 They passed the tower of Widder-
 ington,
 Mother of many a valiant son;
 At Coquet-isle their beads they
 tell 140
 To the good saint who owned the
 cell;
 Then did the Alne attention claim,
 And Warkworth, proud of Percy's
 name;
 And next they crossed themselves
 to hear
 The whitening breakers sound so
 near,
 Where, boiling through the rocks,
 they roar
 On Dunstanborough's caverned
 shore;
 Thy tower, proud Bamborough,
 marked they there,
 King Ida's castle, huge and
 square,
 From its tall rock look grimly
 down, 150
 And on the swelling ocean frown;
 Then from the coast they bore
 away,
 And reached the Holy Island's bay.

IX

The tide did now its flood-mark
 gain,
 And girdled in the Saint's domain;
 For, with the flow and ebb, its
 style
 Varies from continent to isle:
 Dry shod, o'er sands, twice every
 day
 The pilgrims to the shrine find
 way;
 Twice every day the waves efface
 Of staves and sandalled feet the
 trace. 161

As to the port the galley flew,
 Higher and higher rose to view
 The castle with its battled walls,
 The ancient monastery's halls,
 A solemn, huge, and dark-red pile,
 Placed on the margin of the isle.

X

In Saxon strength that abbey
 frowned,
 With massive arches broad and
 round,
 That rose alternate, row and
 row, 170
 On ponderous columns, short
 and low,
 Built ere the art was known,
 By pointed aisle and shafted
 stalk
 The arcades of an alleys walk
 To emulate in stone.
 On the deep walls the heathen
 Dane
 Had poured his impious rage in
 vain;
 And needful was such strength to
 these,
 Exposed to the tempestuous seas,
 Scourged by the winds' eternal
 sway, 180
 Open to rovers fierce as they,
 Which could twelve hundred
 years withstand
 Winds, waves, and northern pi-
 rates' hand.
 Not but that portions of the pile,
 Rebuilt in a later style,
 Showed where the spoiler's hand
 had been;
 Not but the wasting sea-breeze
 keen
 Had worn the pillar's carving
 quaint,
 And mouldered in his niche the
 saint,
 And rounded with consuming
 power 190
 The pointed angles of each tower;
 Yet still entire the abbey stood,
 Like veteran, worn, but unsub-
 dued.

XI

Soon as they neared his turrets
strong,
The maidens raised Saint Hilda's
song,
And with the sea-wave and the
wind

Their voices, sweetly shrill, com-
bined,

And made harmonious close ;
Then, answering from the sandy
shore,

Half-drowned amid the breakers'
roar, 200

According chorus rose :
Down to the haven of the Isle
The monks and nuns in order file

From Cuthbert's cloisters grim ;
Banner, and cross, and relics there,
To meet Saint Hilda's maids, they
bare ;

And, as they caught the sounds on
air,

They echoed back the hymn.
The islanders in joyous mood
Rushed emulously through the
flood 210

To hale the bark to land ;
Conspicuous by her veil and hood,
Signing the cross, the Abbess
stood,

And blessed them with her hand.

XII

Suppose we now the welcome said,
Suppose the convent banquet
made :

All through the holy dome,
Through cloister, aisle, and gal-
lery,

Wherever vestal maid might pry,
Nor risk to meet unhallowed eye,

The stranger sisters roam ; 221
Till fell the evening damp with
dew,

And the sharp sea-breeze coldly
blew,

For there even summer night is
chill.

Then, having strayed and gazed
their fill,

They closed around the fire ;
And all, in turn, essayed to paint
The rival merits of their saint,
A theme that ne'er can tire
A holy maid, for be it known 230
That their saint's honor is their
own.

XIII

Then Whitby's nuns exulting told
How to their house three barons
bald

Must menial service do,
While horns blow out a note of
shame,

And monks cry, 'Fie upon your
name !

In wrath, for loss of sylvan game,
Saint Hilda's priest ye slew.' —

'This, on Ascension-day, each year
While laboring on our harbor-
pier, 240

Must Herbert, Bruce, and Percy
hear.' —

They told how in their convent-
cell

A Saxon princess once did dwell,
The lovely Edelfled ;

And how, of thousand snakes, each
one

Was changed into a coil of stone
When holy Hilda prayed ;

Themselves, within their holy
bound,

Their stony folds had often found.
They told how sea-fowls' pinions

fail, 250
As over Whitby's towers they sail,

And, sinking down, with flutter-
ings faint,

They do their homage to the saint.

XIV

Nor did Saint Cuthbert's daughters
fail

To vie with these in holy tale ;
His body's resting-place, of old,

How oft their patron changed,
they told ;

How, when the rude Dane burned
their pile,

The monks fled forth from Holy
Isle ;
O'er Northern mountain, marsh,
and moor, 260
From sea to sea, from shore to
shore,
Seven years Saint Cuthbert's
corpse they bore.

They rested them in fair Mel-
rose ;

But though, alive, he loved it
well,

Nor there his relics might re-
pose ;

For, wondrous tale to tell !

In his stone coffin forth he rides,
A ponderous bark for river tides,

Yet light as gossamer it glides
Downward to Tilmouth cell.

Nor long was his abiding there,
For southward did the saint re-
pair ;

Chester-le-Street and Ripon saw
His holy corpse ere Wardilaw

Hailed him with joy and fear ;

And, after many wanderings past,
He chose his lordly seat at last

Where his cathedral, huge and
vast,

Looks down upon the Wear.

There, deep in Durham's Gothic
shade, 280

His relics are in secret laid ;

But none may know the place,
Save of his holiest servants three,

Deep sworn to solemn secrecy,

Who share that wondrous grace.

XV

Who may his miracles declare ?

Even Scotland's dauntless king
and heir —

Although with them they led
Galwegians, wild as ocean's gale,
And Loden's knights, all sheathed
in mail, 290

And the bold men of Teviotdale —
Before his standard fled.

'T was he, to vindicate his reign,
Edged Alfred's falchion on the
Dane,

And turned the Conqueror back
again,
When, with his Norman bowyer
band,
He came to waste Northumber-
land.

XVI

But fain Saint Hilda's nuns would
learn

If on a rock, by Lindisfarne,
Saint Cuthbert sits, and toils to
frame 300

The sea-born beads that bear his
name :

Such tales had Whitby's fishers
told,

And said they might his shape be-
hold,

And hear his anvil sound ;

A deadened clang, — a huge dim
form,

Seen but, and heard, when gather-
ing storm

And night were closing round.

But this, as tale of idle fame,
The nuns of Lindisfarne disclaim.

XVII

While round the fire such legends
go, 310

Far different was the scene of
woe

Where, in a secret aisle beneath,
Council was held of life and death.

It was more dark and lone, that
vault,

Than the worst dungeon cell ;

Old Colwulf built it, for his fault

In penitence to dwell,

When he for cowl and beads laid
down

The Saxon battle-axe and crown.

This den, which, chilling every
sense 320

Of feeling, hearing, sight,

Was called the Vault of Penitence,
Excluding air and light,

Was by the prelate Sexhelm made
A place of burial for such dead

As, having died in mortal sin,

Might not be laid the church
within.

'T was now a place of punish-
ment;

Whence if so loud a shriek were
sent

As reached the upper air, 330
The hearers blessed themselves,
and said

The spirits of the sinful dead
Bemoaned their torments there.

XVIII

But though, in the monastic pile,
Did of this penitential aisle

Some vague tradition go,
Few only, save the Abbot, knew
Where the place lay, and still more
few

Were those who had from him the
clew

To that dread vault to go. 340
Victim and executioner

Were blindfold when transported
there.

In low dark rounds the arches
hung,

From the rude rock the side-walls
sprung;

The gravestones, rudely sculp-
tured o'er,

Half sunk in earth, by time half
wore,

Were all the pavement of the
floor;

The mildew-drops fell one by one,
With tinkling splash, upon the
stone.

A cresset, in an iron chain, 350
Which served to light this drear
domain,

With damp and darkness seemed
to strive,

As if it scarce might keep alive;
And yet it dimly served to show
The awful conclave met below.

XIX

There, met to doom in secrecy,
Were placed the heads of convents
three,

All servants of Saint Benedict,
The statutes of whose order strict
On iron table lay; 360

In long black dress, on seats of
stone,

Behind were these three judges
shown

By the pale cresset's ray.

The Abbess of Saint Hilda's there
Sat for a space with visage bare,

Until, to hide her bosom's swell,
And tear-drops that for pity fell,

She closely drew her veil;

Yon shrouded figure, as I guess,
By her proud mien and flowing

dress, 370

Is Tynemouth's haughty Prior-
ess,

And she with awe looks pale;

And he, that ancient man, whose
sight

Has long been quenched by age's
night,

Upon whose wrinkled brow alone
Nor ruth nor mercy's trace is

shown,

Whose look is hard and stern,—
Saint Cuthbert's Abbot is his style,

For sanctity called through the
isle

The Saint of Lindisfarne. 380

XX

Before them stood a guilty pair;
But, though an equal fate they
share,

Yet one alone deserves our care.

Her sex a page's dress belied;

The cloak and doublet, loosely
tied,

Obscured her charms, but could
not hide.

Her cap down o'er her face she
drew;

And, on her doublet breast,
She tried to hide the badge of

blue, 389

Lord Marmion's falcon crest.

But, at the prioress' command,

A monk undid the silken band
That tied her tresses fair,

And raised the bonnet from her
head,
And down her slender form they
spread

In ringlets rich and rare.
Constance de Beverley they know,
Sister professed of Fontevraud,
Whom the Church numbered with
the dead, 399
For broken vows and convent fled.

XXI

When thus her face was given to
view, —
Although so pallid was her hue,
It did a ghastly contrast bear
To those bright ringlets glistening
fair, —

Her look composed, and steady
eye,
Bespoke a matchless constancy;
And there she stood so calm and
pale
That, but her breathing did not
fail,
And motion slight of eye and head,
And of her bosom, warranted 410
That neither sense nor pulse she
lacks,
You might have thought a form of
wax,
Wrought to the very life, was
there;
So still she was, so pale, so fair.

XXII

Her comrade was a sordid soul,
Such as does murder for a meed;
Who, but of fear, knows no con-
trol,
Because his conscience, seared
and foul,
Feels not the import of his deed;
One whose brute-feeling ne'er as-
pires 420
Beyond his own more brute de-
sires.
Such tools the Tempter ever needs
To do the savagest of deeds;
For them no visioned terrors
daunt,

Their nights no fancied spectres
haunt;
One fear with them, of all most
base,
The fear of death, alone finds
place.
This wretch was clad in frock and
cowl,
And shamed not loud to moan and
howl,
His body on the floor to dash, 430
And crouch, like hound beneath
the lash;
While his mute partner, standing
near,
Waited her doom without a tear.

XXIII

Yet well the luckless wretch
might shriek,
Well might her paleness terror
speak!
For there were seen in that dark
wall
Two niches, narrow, deep, and
tall; —
Who enters at such grisly door
Shall ne'er, I ween, find exit more.
In each a slender meal was laid, 440
Of roots, of water, and of bread;
By each, in Benedictine dress,
Two haggard monks stood motion-
less,
Who, holding high a blazing torch,
Showed the grim entrance of the
porch;
Reflecting back the smoky beam,
The dark-red walls and arches
gleam.
Hewn stones and cement were dis-
played,
And building tools in order laid.

XXIV

These executioners were chose 450
As men who were with mankind
foes,
And, with despite and envy fired,
Into the cloister had retired,
Or who, in desperate doubt of
grace,

Strove by deep penance to efface
Of some foul crime the stain ;
For, as the vassals of her will,
Such men the Church selected
still

As either joyed in doing ill, ⁴⁵⁹
Or thought more grace to gain
If in her cause they wrestled down
Feelings their nature strove to
own.

By strange device were they
brought there,
They knew not how, and knew
not where.

XXV

And now that blind old Abbot
rose,

To speak the Chapter's doom
On those the wall was to enclose
Alive within the tomb,
But stopped because that woful
maid,

Gathering her powers, to speak
essay'd ; ⁴⁷⁰

Twice she essay'd, and twice in
vain,

Her accents might no utterance
gain ;

Nought but imperfect murmurs
slip

From her convulsed and quiver-
ing lip :

'Twixt each attempt all was so
still,

You seemed to hear a distant
rill —

'T was ocean's swells and
falls ;

For though this vault of sin and
fear

Was to the sounding surge so
near,

A tempest there you scarce
could hear, ⁴⁸⁰

So massive were the walls.

XXVI

At length, an effort sent apart
The blood that curdled to her
heart,

And light came to her eye,
And color dawned upon her cheek,
A hectic and a fluttered streak,
Like that left on the Cheviot
peak

By Autumn's stormy sky ;
And when her silence broke at
length,

Still as she spoke she gathered
strength, ⁴⁹⁰

And armed herself to bear.
It was a fearful sight to see
Such high resolve and constancy
In form so soft and fair.

XXVII

'I speak not to implore your grace,
Well know I for one minute's
space

Successless might I sue :
Nor do I speak your prayers to
gain ;

For if a death of lingering pain
To cleanse my sins be penance
vain, ⁵⁰⁰

Vain are your masses too. —

I listened to a traitor's tale,
I left the convent and the veil ;
For three long years I bowed my
pride,

A horse-boy in his train to ride ;
And well my folly's meed he gave,
Who forfeited, to be his slave,
All here, and all beyond the grave.
He saw young Clara's face more
fair,

He knew her of broad lands the
heir, ⁵¹⁰

Forgot his vows, his faith for-
swore,

And Constance was beloved no
more.

'T is an old tale, and often told ;
But did my fate and wish
agree,

Ne'er had been read, in story
old,

Of maiden true betrayed for
gold,

That loved, or was avenged,
like me !

XXVIII

' The king approved his favorite's
aim;
In vain a rival barred his claim,
Whose fate with Clare's was
plight, 520
For he attaints that rival's fame
With treason's charge — and on
they came
In mortal lists to fight.
Their oaths are said,
Their prayers are prayed,
Their lances in the rest are
laid,
They meet in mortal shock;
And hark! the throng, with thun-
dering cry,
Shout "Marmion, Marmion! to
the sky, 529
De Wilton to the block!"
Say, ye who preach Heaven shall
decide
When in the lists two champions
ride,
Say, was Heaven's justice here?
When, loyal in his love and faith,
Wilton found overthrow or death
Beneath a traitor's spear?
How false the charge, how true he
fell,
This guilty packet best can tell.'
Then drew a packet from her
breast,
Paused, gathered voice, and spoke
the rest. 540

XXIX

' Still was false Marmion's bridal
stayed;
To Whitby's convent fled the
maid,
The hated match to shun.
"Ho! shifts she thus?" King
Henry cried,
"Sir Marmion, she shall be thy
bride,
If she were sworn a nun."
One way remained — the king's
command
Sent Marmion to the Scottish
land;

I lingered here, and rescue planned
For Clara and for me: 550
This caitiff monk for gold did
swear
He would to Whitby's shrine re-
pair,
And by his drugs my rival fair
A saint in heaven should be;
But ill the dastard kept his oath,
Whose cowardice hath undone us
both.

XXX

' And now my tongue the secret
tells,
Not that remorse my bosom swells,
But to assure my soul that none
Shall ever wed with Marmion. 560
Had fortune my last hope be-
trayed,
This packet, to the king conveyed,
Had given him to the headsman's
stroke,
Although my heart that instant
broke. —
Now, men of death, work forth
your will,
For I can suffer, and be still;
And come he slow, or come he
fast,
It is but Death who comes at
last.

XXXI

' Yet dread me from my living
tomb,
Ye vassal slaves of bloody Rome!
If Marmion's late remorse should
wake, 571
Full soon such vengeance will he
take
That you shall wish the fiery Dane
Had rather been your guest again.
Behind, a darker hour ascends!
The altars quake, the crosier
bends,
The ire of a despotic king
Rides forth upon destruction's
wing;
Then shall these vaults, so strong
and deep,

Burst open to the sea - winds'
 sweep; 580
 Some traveller then shall find my
 bones
 Whitening amid disjointed stones,
 And, ignorant of priests' cruelty,
 Marvel such relics here should be.'

XXXII

Fixed was her look and stern her
 air;
 Back from her shoulders streamed
 her hair;
 The locks that wont her brow to
 shade
 Stared up erectly from her head;
 Her figure seemed to rise more
 high;
 Her voice despair's wild energy
 Had given a tone of prophecy. 591
 Appalled the astonished conclave
 sate;
 With stupid eyes, the men of fate
 Gazed on the light inspired form,
 And listened for the avenging
 storm;
 The judges felt the victim's dread;
 No hand was moved, no word was
 said,
 Till thus the abbot's doom was
 given,
 Raising his sightless balls to hea-
 ven:
 'Sister, let thy sorrows cease; 600
 Sinful brother, part in peace!'
 From that dire dungeon, place of
 doom,
 Of execution too, and tomb,
 Paced forth the judges three;
 Sorrow it were and shame to tell
 The butcher-work that there be-
 fell,
 When they had glided from the
 cell
 Of sin and misery.

XXXIII

An hundred winding steps convey
 That conclave to the upper day;
 But ere they breathed the fresher
 air 611

They heard the shriekings of de-
 spair,

And many a stifled groan.
 With speed their upward way they
 take, —
 Such speed as age and fear can
 make, —
 And crossed themselves for ter-
 ror's sake,
 As hurrying, tottering on,
 Even in the vesper's heavenly tone
 They seemed to hear a dying
 groan,
 And bade the passing knell to toll
 For welfare of a parting soul. 621
 Slow o'er the midnight wave it
 swung,
 Northumbrian rocks in answer
 rung;
 To Warkworth cell the echoes
 rolled,
 His beads the wakeful hermit
 told;
 The Bamborough peasant raised
 his head,
 But slept ere half a prayer he said;
 So far was heard the mighty knell,
 The stag sprung up on Cheviot
 Fell,
 Spread his broad nostril to the
 wind, 630
 Listed before, aside, behind,
 Then couched him down beside
 the hind,
 And quaked among the mountain
 fern,
 To hear that sound so dull and
 stern.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO
THIRD

TO WILLIAM ERSKINE, ESQ.

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest

LIKE April morning clouds, that
 pass
 With varying shadow o'er the
 grass,
 And imitate on field and furrow

Life's checkered scene of joy and
sorrow;
Like streamlet of the mountain
north,
Now in a torrent racing forth,
Now winding slow its silver train,
And almost slumbering on the
plain;
Like breezes of the autumn day,
Whose voice inconstant dies away,
And ever swells again as fast 11
When the ear deems its murmur
past;
Thus various, my romantic theme
Flits, winds, or sinks, a morning
dream.
Yet pleased, our eye pursues the
trace
Of Light and Shade's inconstant
race;
Pleased, views the rivulet afar,
Weaving its maze irregular;
And pleased, we listen as the
breeze
Heaves its wild sigh through Au-
tumn trees: 20
Then, wild as cloud, or stream, or
gale,
Flow on, flow unconfined, my tale!

Need I to thee, dear Erskine, tell
I love the license all too well,
In sounds now lowly, and now
strong,
To raise the desultory song?
Oft, when mid such capricious
chime
Some transient fit of loftier rhyme
To thy kind judgment seemed ex-
cuse
For many an error of the muse, 30
Oft hast thou said, 'If, still mis-
spent,
Thine hours to poetry are lent,
Go, and to tame thy wandering
course,
Quaff from the fountain at the
source;
Approach those masters o'er
whose tomb
Immortal laurels ever bloom:

Instructive of the feeble bard,
Still from the grave their voice is
heard;
From them, and from the paths
they showed,
Choose honored guide and prac-
tised road; 40
Nor ramble on through brake and
maze,
With harpers rude of barbarous
days.

'Or deem'st thou not our later
time
Yields topic meet for classic
rhyme?
Hast thou no elegiac verse
For BRUNSWICK'S venerable
hearse?
What! not a line, a tear, a sigh,
When valor bleeds for liberty? —
Oh, hero of that glorious time,
When, with unrivalled light sub-
lime, — 50
Though martial Austria, and
though all
The might of Russia, and the
Gaul,
Though banded Europe stood her
foes —
The star of Brandenburg arose!
Thou couldst not live to see her
beam
Forever quenched in Jena's
stream.
Lamented chief! — it was not
given
To thee to change the doom of
Heaven,
And crush that dragon in its birth,
Predestined scourge of guilty
earth. 60
Lamented chief! — not thine the
power
To save in that presumptuous hour
When Prussia hurried to the field,
And snatched the spear, but left
the shield!
Valor and skill 't was thine to try,
And, tried in vain, 't was thine to
die.

Ill had it seemed thy silver hair
 The last, the bitterest pang to
 share,
 For princedoms reft, and scutch-
 eons riven,
 And birthrights to usurpers given;
 Thy land's, thy children's wrongs
 to feel, 71
 And witness woes thou couldst
 not heal!
 On thee relenting Heaven bestows
 For honored life an honored close;
 And when revolves, in time's sure
 change,
 The hour of Germany's revenge,
 When, breathing fury for her sake,
 Some new Arminius shall awake,
 Her champion, ere he strike, shall
 come
 To whet his sword on BRUNS-
 WICK's tomb. 80

'Or of the Red-Cross hero teach,
 Dauntless in dungeon as on breach.
 Alike to him the sea, the shore,
 The brand, the bridle, or the oar:
 Alike to him the war that calls
 Its votaries to the shattered walls
 Which the grim Turk, besmeared
 with blood,
 Against the Invincible made good;
 Or that whose thundering voice
 could wake
 The silence of the polar lake, 90
 When stubborn Russ and mettled
 Swede
 On the warped wave their death-
 game played;
 Or that where Vengeance and
 Affright
 Howled round the father of the
 fight,
 Who snatched on Alexandria's
 sand
 The conqueror's wreath with dying
 hand.

'Or, if to touch such chord be
 thine,
 Restore the ancient tragic line,
 And emulate the notes that rung

From the wild harp which silent
 hung 100
 By silver Avon's holy shore
 Till twice an hundred years rolled
 o'er;
 When she, the bold Enchantress,
 came,
 With fearless hand and heart on
 flame,
 From the pale willow snatched
 the treasure,
 And swept it with a kindred mea-
 sure,
 Till Avon's swans, while rung the
 grove
 With Montfort's hate and Basil's
 love,
 Awakening at the inspired strain,
 Deemed their own Shakespeare
 lived again.' 110

Thy friendship thus thy judg-
 ment wronging
 With praises not to me belong-
 ing,
 In task more meet for mightiest
 powers
 Wouldst thou engage my thrift-
 less hours.
 But say, my Erskine, hast thou
 weighed
 That secret power by all obeyed,
 Which warps not less the passive
 mind,
 Its source concealed or undefined;
 Whether an impulse, that has
 birth 119
 Soon as the infant wakes on earth,
 One with our feelings and our
 powers,
 And rather part of us than ours;
 Or whether fittler termed the
 sway
 Of habit, formed in early day?
 Howe'er derived, its force con-
 fessed
 Rules with despotic sway the
 breast,
 And drags us on by viewless chain,
 While taste and reason plead in
 vain,

Look east, and ask the Belgian
 why,
 Beneath Batavia's sultry sky, 130
 He seeks not eager to inhale
 The freshness of the mountain
 gale,
 Content to rear his whitened wall
 Beside the dank and dull canal?
 He'll say, from youth he loved to
 see
 The white sail gliding by the tree.
 Or see yon weather-beaten hind,
 Whose sluggish herds before him
 wind,
 Whose tattered plaid and rugged
 cheek
 His northern clime and kindred
 speak; 140
 Through England's laughing
 meads he goes,
 And England's wealth around him
 flows;
 Ask if it would content him well,
 At ease in those gay plains to
 dwell,
 Where hedge-rows spread a ver-
 dant screen,
 And spires and forests intervene,
 And the neat cottage peeps be-
 tween?
 No! not for these will he ex-
 change
 His dark Lochaber's boundless
 range,
 Not for fair Devon's meads for-
 sake 150
 Ben Nevis gray and Garry's lake.

Thus while I ape the measure
 wild
 Of tales that charmed me yet a
 child,
 Rude though they be, still with
 the chime
 Return the thoughts of early time;
 And feelings, roused in life's first
 day,
 Glow in the line and prompt the
 lay.
 Then rise those crags, that moun-
 tain tower,

Which charmed my fancy's waken-
 ing hour.
 Though no broad river swept
 along, 160
 To claim, perchance, heroic song,
 Though sighed no groves in sum-
 mer gale,
 To prompt of love a softer tale,
 Though scarce a puny streamlet's
 speed
 Claimed homage from a shepherd's
 reed,
 Yet was poetic impulse given
 By the green hill and clear blue
 heaven.
 It was a barren scene and wild,
 Where naked cliffs were rudely
 piled,
 But ever and anon between 170
 Lay velvet tufts of loveliest green;
 And well the lonely infant knew
 Recesses where the wall-flower
 grew,
 And honeysuckle loved to crawl
 Up the low crag and ruined wall.
 I deemed such nooks the sweetest
 shade
 The sun in all its round surveyed;
 And still I thought that shattered
 tower
 The mightiest work of human
 power,
 And marvelled as the aged hind 180
 With some strange tale bewitched
 my mind
 Of forayers, who with headlong
 force
 Down from that strength had
 spurred their horse,
 Their southern rapine to renew
 Far in the distant Cheviots blue,
 And, home returning, filled the
 hall
 With revel, wassail-rout, and
 brawl.
 Methought that still with trump
 and clang
 The gateway's broken arches
 rang;
 Methought grim features, seamed
 with scars, 190

Glared through the window's rusty
bars,
And ever, by the winter hearth,
Old tales I heard of woe or mirth,
Of lovers' sleights, of ladies'
charms,
Of witches' spells, of warriors'
arms;
Of patriot battles, won of old
By Wallace wight and Bruce the
bold;
Of later fields of feud and fight,
When, pouring from their High-
land height,
The Scottish clans in headlong
sway 200
Had swept the scarlet ranks away.
While stretched at length upon
the floor,
Again I fought each combat o'er,
Pebbles and shells, in order laid,
The mimic ranks of war displayed;
And onward still the Scottish
Lion bore,
And still the scattered Southron
fled before.

Still, with vain fondness, could
I trace
Anew each kind familiar face
That brightened at our evening
fire! 210
From the thatched mansion's gray-
haired sire,
Wise without learning, plain and
good,
And sprung of Scotland's gentler
blood;
Whose eye in age, quick, clear,
and keen,
Showed what in youth its glance
had been;
Whose doom discording neighbors
sought,
Content with equity unbought;
To him the venerable priest,
Our frequent and familiar guest,
Whose life and manners well could
paint 220
Alike the student and the saint,
Alas! whose speech too oft I broke

With gambol rude and timeless
joke:
For I was wayward, bold, and
wild,
A self-willed imp, a grandame's
child,
But half a plague, and half a jest,
Was still endured, beloved, ca-
ressed.

From me, thus nurtured, dost
thou ask
The classic poet's well-conned
task?
Nay, Erskine, nay — on the wild
hill 230
Let the wild heath-bell flourish
still;
Cherish the tulip, prune the vine,
But freely let the woodbine twine
And leave untrimmed the eglan-
tine:
Nay, my friend, nay — since oft
thy praise
Hath given fresh vigor to my lays,
Since oft thy judgment could re-
fine
My flattened thought or cumbrous
line,
Still kind, as is thy wont, attend,
And in the minstrel spare the
friend. 240
Though wild as cloud, as stream,
as gale,
Flow forth, flow unrestrained, my
tale!

CANTO THIRD

THE HOSTEL, OR INN

I

THE livelong day Lord Marmion
rode;
The mountain path the Palmer
showed
By glen and streamlet winded
still,
Where stunted birches hid the
rill.

They might not choose the low-
land road,
For the Merse forayers were
abroad,
Who, fired with hate and thirst of
prey,
Had scarcely failed to bar their
way.
Oft on the trampling band from
crown
Of some tall cliff the deer looked
down; 10
On wing of jet from his repose
In the deep heath the blackcock
rose;
Sprung from the gorse the timid
roe,
Nor waited for the bending bow;
And when the stony path began
By which the naked peak they
wan,
Up flew the snowy ptarmigan.
The noon had long been passed
before
They gained the height of Lam-
mermoor;
Thence winding down the northern
way, 20
Before them at the close of day
Old Gifford's towers and hamlet
lay.

II

No summons calls them to the
tower,
To spend the hospitable hour.
To Scotland's camp the lord was
gone;
His cautious dame, in bower alone,
Dreaded her castle to uncloze,
So late, to unknown friends or
foes.
On through the hamlet as they
paced,
Before a porch whose front was
graced 30
With bush and flagon trimly
placed,
Lord Marmion drew his rein:
The village inn seemed large,
though rude;

Its cheerful fire and hearty food
Might well relieve his train.
Down from their seats the horse-
men sprung,
With jingling spurs the court-yard
rung;
They bind their horses to the stall,
For forage, food, and firing call,
And various clamor fills the hall:
Weighing the labor with the
cost, 41
Toils everywhere the bustling
host.

III

Soon, by the chimney's merry
blaze,
Through the rude hostel might you
gaze,
Might see where in dark nook
aloof
The rafters of the sooty roof
Bore wealth of winter cheer;
Of sea-fowl dried, and solands
store,
And gammons of the tusky boar,
And savory haunch of deer. 50
The chimney arch projected wide;
Above, around it, and beside,
Were tools for housewives' hand;
Nor wanted, in that martial day,
The implements of Scottish fray,
The buckler, lance, and brand.
Beneath its shade, the place of
state,
On oaken settle Marmion sate,
And viewed around the blazing
hearth
His followers mix in noisy mirth;
Whom with brown ale, in jolly
tide, 61
From ancient vessels ranged aside
Full actively their host supplied.

IV

Theirs was the glee of martial
breast,
And laughter theirs at little jest;
And oft Lord Marmion deigned to
aid,
And mingle in the mirth they
made;

For though, with men of high degree,
 The proudest of the proud was he,
 Yet, trained in camps, he knew the art

70
 To win the soldiers' hardy heart.
 They love a captain to obey,
 Boisterous as March, yet fresh as May;

With open hand and brow as free,
 Lover of wine and minstrelsy;
 Ever the first to scale a tower,
 As venturous in a lady's bower: —
 Such buxom chief shall lead his host

From India's fires to Zembla's frost.

V

Resting upon his pilgrim staff, 80
 Right opposite the Palmer stood,
 His thin dark visage seen but half,
 Half hidden by his hood.

Still fixed on Marmion was his look,

Which he, who ill such gaze could brook,

Strove by a frown to quell;
 But not for that, though more than once

Full met their stern encountering glance,

The Palmer's visage fell.

VI

By fits less frequent from the crowd 90

Was heard the burst of laughter loud;

For still, as squire and archer stared

On that dark face and matted beard,

Their glee and game declined.
 All gazed at length in silence drear,

Unbroke save when in comrade's ear

Some yeoman, wondering in his fear,

Thus whispered forth his mind;

' Saint Mary! saw'st thou e'er such sight?

How pale his cheek, his eye how bright,

100
 Whene'er the firebrand's fickle light

Glances beneath his cowl!

Full on our lord he sets his eye;

For his best palfrey would not I

Endure that sullen scowl.'

VII

But Marmion, as to chase the awe
 Which thus had quelled their hearts who saw

The ever-varying firelight show
 That figure stern and face of woe,

Now called upon a squire: 110

' Fitz-Eustace, know'st thou not some lay,

To speed the lingering night away?

We slumber by the fire.'

VIII

' So please you,' thus the youth rejoined,

' Our choicest minstrel's left behind.

Ill may we hope to please your ear,
 Accustomed Constant's strains to hear.

The harp full deftly can he strike,
 And wake the lover's lute alike;

To dear Saint Valentine no thrush 120

Sings livelier from a springtide bush,

No nightingale her lovelorn tune
 More sweetly warbles to the moon.

Woe to the cause, whate'er it be,
 Detains from us his melody,

Lavished on rocks and billows stern,

Or duller monks of Lindisfarne.

Now must I venture as I may,

To sing his favorite roundelay.'

IX

A mellow voice Fitz-Eustace had,
 The air he chose was wild and sad;

Such have I heard in Scottish land

Rise from the busy harvest band,
When falls before the mountaineer
On Lowland plains the ripened ear.
Now one shrill voice the notes pro-
long,

Now a wild chorus swells the
song:

Oft have I listened and stood still
As it came softened up the hill,
And deemed it the lament of men
Who languished for their native
glen,

And thought how sad would be
such sound

On Susquehanna's swampy
ground,

Kentucky's wood-encumbered
brake,

Or wild Ontario's boundless lake,
Where heart-sick exiles in the
strain

Recalled fair Scotland's hills
again!

X

SONG

Where shall the lover rest,
Whom the fates sever
From his true maiden's breast, 150
Parted forever?

Where, through groves deep and
high,

Sounds the far billow,
Where early violets die,
Under the willow.

CHORUS

Eleu loro, etc. Soft shall be his
pillow.

There, through the summer day,
Cool streams are laving;
There, while the tempests sway,
Scarce are boughs waving; 160
There thy rest shalt thou take,
Parted forever,
Never again to wake,
Never, O never!

CHORUS

Eleu loro, etc. Never, O never!

XI

Where shall the traitor rest,
He the deceiver,
Who could win maiden's breast,
Ruin and leave her?

In the lost battle, 170

Borne down by the flying,
Where mingles war's rattle
With groans of the dying.

CHORUS

Eleu loro, etc. There shall he be
lying.

Her wing shall the eagle flap
O'er the false-hearted;
His warm blood the wolf shall lap,
Ere life be parted.

Shame and dishonor sit
By his grave ever; 180
Blessing shall hallow it,—
Never, O never!

CHORUS

Eleu loro, etc. Never, O never!

XII

It ceased, the melancholy sound,
And silence sunk on all around.
The air was sad; but sadder still
It fell on Marmion's ear,
And plained as if disgrace and ill,
And shameful death, were near.
He drew his mantle past his face,
Between it and the band, 191
And rested with his head a space
Reclining on his hand.

His thoughts I scan not; but I
ween

That, could their import have been
seen,

The meanest groom in all the hall,
That e'er tied courser to a stall,
Would scarce have wished to be
their prey,
For Lutterward and Fontenaye.

XIII

High minds, of native pride and
force, 200
Most deeply feel thy pangs, Re-
morse!

Fear for their scourge mean villains have,

Thou art the torturer of the brave!
Yet fatal strength they boast to steel

Their minds to bear the wounds they feel,

Even while they writhe beneath the smart

Of civil conflict in the heart.

For soon Lord Marmion raised his head,

And smiling to Fitz-Eustace said:
'Is it not strange that, as ye sung,

Seemed in mine ear a death-peal rung,
211

Such as in nunneries they toll
For some departing sister's soul?

Say, what may this portend?'
Then first the Palmer silence

broke,—
The livelong day he had not spoke,—

'The death of a dear friend.'

XIV

Marmion, whose steady heart and eye

Ne'er changed in worst extremity,

Marmion, whose soul could scantily brook
220

Even from his king a haughty look,

Whose accent of command controlled

In camps the boldest of the bold—
Thought, look, and utterance

failed him now,
Fallen was his glance and flushed his brow;

For either in the tone,
Or something in the Palmer's look,

So full upon his conscience strook
That answer he found none.

Thus oft it haps that when within
230

They shrink at sense of secret sin,
A feather daunts the brave;

A fool's wild speech confounds the wise,

And proudest princes veil their eyes

Before their meanest slave.

XV

Well might he falter!—By his aid
Was Constance Beverley betrayed.

Not that he augured of the doom
Which on the living closed the

tomb:

But, tired to hear the desperate maid
240

Threaten by turns, beseech, upbraid,

And wroth because in wild despair
She practised on the life of Clare,

Its fugitive the Church he gave,
Though not a victim, but a slave,

And deemed restraint in convent strange

Would hide her wrongs and her revenge.

Himself, proud Henry's favorite peer,

Held Romish thunders idle fear;
Secure his pardon he might hold

For some slight mulct of penance-gold.
251

Thus judging, he gave secret way
When the stern priests surprised

their prey.
His train but deemed the favorite

page
Was left behind to spare his age;

Or other if they deemed, none dared

To mutter what he thought and heard:

Woe to the vassal who durst pry
Into Lord Marmion's privacy!

XVI

His conscience slept—he deemed
her well,
260

And safe secured in distant cell;
But, wakened by her favorite lay,

And that strange Palmer's boding say

That fell so ominous and drear
Full on the object of his fear,

To aid remorse's venom'd throes,

Dark tales of convent-vengeance
 rose;
 And Constance, late betrayed and
 scorned,
 All lovely on his soul returned;
 Lovely as when at treacherous
 call 270
 She left her convent's peaceful
 wall,
 Crimsoned with shame, with ter-
 ror mute,
 Dreading alike escape, pursuit,
 Till love, victorious o'er alarms,
 Hid fears and blushes in his arms.

XVII

'Alas!' he thought, 'how changed
 that mien!
 How changed these timid looks
 have been,
 Since years of guilt and of disguise
 Have steeled her brow and armed
 her eyes! 279
 No more of virgin terror speaks
 The blood that mantles in her
 cheeks;
 Fierce and unfeminine are there,
 Frenzy for joy, for grief despair;
 And I the cause — for whom were
 given
 Her peace on earth, her hopes in
 heaven! —
 Would,' thought he, as the picture
 grows,
 'I on its stalk had left the rose!
 Oh, why should man's success re-
 move
 The very charms that wake his
 love? — 289
 Her convent's peaceful solitude
 Is now a prison harsh and rude;
 And, pent within the narrow cell,
 How will her spirit chafe and swell!
 How brook the stern monastic
 laws!
 The penance how — and I the
 cause! —
 Vigil and scourge — perchance
 even worse!'
 And twice he rose to cry, 'To
 horse!'

And twice his sovereign's mandate
 came,
 Like damp upon a kindling flame;
 And twice he thought, 'Gave I not
 charge 300
 She should be safe, though not at
 large?
 They durst not, for their island,
 shred
 One golden ringlet from her head.'

XVIII

While thus in Marmion's bosom
 strove
 Repentance and reviving love,
 Like whirlwinds whose contend-
 ing sway
 I've seen Loch Vennachar obey,
 Their host the Palmer's speech
 had heard,
 And talkative took up the word:
 'Ay, reverend pilgrim, you who
 stray 310
 From Scotland's simple land
 away,
 To visit realms afar,
 Full often learned the art to
 know
 Of future weal or future woe,
 By word, or sign, or star;
 Yet might a knight his fortune
 hear,
 If, knight-like, he despises fear,
 Not far from hence; — if fathers
 old
 Aright our hamlet legend told.'
 These broken words the menials
 move, — 320
 For marvels still the vulgar love, —
 And, Marmion giving license cold,
 His tale the host thus gladly
 told: —

XIX

THE HOST'S TALE

'A clerk could tell what years
 have flown
 Since Alexander filled our throne, —
 Third monarch of that warlike
 name, —

And eke the time when here he
came

To seek Sir Hugo, then our lord :
A braver never drew a sword ;
A wiser never, at the hour 330
Of midnight, spoke the word of
power ;

The same whom ancient records
call

The founder of the Goblin-Hall.
I would, Sir Knight, your longer
stay

Gave you that cavern to survey.
Of lofty roof and ample size,
Beneath the castle deep it lies :
To hew the living rock profound,
The floor to pave, the arch to
round, 339

There never toiled a mortal arm,
It all was wrought by word and
charm ;

And I have heard my grandsire
say

That the wild clamor and affray
Of those dread artisans of hell,
Who labored under Hugo's spell,
Sounded as loud as ocean's war
Among the caverns of Dunbar.

XX

'The king Lord Gifford's castle
sought,

Deep laboring with uncertain
thought.

Even then he mustered all his
host, 350

To meet upon the western coast ;
For Norse and Danish galleys
plied

Their oars within the Firth of
Clyde.

There floated Haco's banner trim
Above Norweyan warriors grim,
Savage of heart and large of limb,
Threatening both continent and
isle,

Bute, Arran, Cunninghame, and
Kyle.

Lord Gifford, deep beneath the
ground, 359

Heard Alexander's bugle sound,

And tarried not his garb to change
But, in his wizard habit strange,
Came forth, — a quaint and fearful
sight :

His mantle lined with fox-skins
white ;

His high and wrinkled forehead
bore

A pointed cap, such as of yore
Clerks say that Pharaoh's Magi
wore ;

His shoes were marked with cross
and spell,

Upon his breast a pentacle ; 369
His zone of virgin parchment thin,
Or, as some tell, of dead man's
skin,

Bore many a planetary sign,
Combust, and retrograde, and
trine ;

And in his hand he held prepared
A naked sword without a guard.

XXI

'Dire dealings with the fiendish
race

Had marked strange lines upon
his face ;

Vigil and fast had worn him grim,
His eyesight dazzled seemed and
dim,

As one unused to upper day ; 380
Even his own menials with dismay

Beheld, Sir Knight, the grisly sire
In this unwonted wild attire ;

Unwonted, for traditions run
He seldom thus beheld the sun.

"I know," he said, — his voice was
hoarse,

And broken seemed its hollow
force, —

"I know the cause, although un-
told,

Why the king seeks his vassal's
hold :

Vainly from me my liege would
know 390

His kingdom's future weal or woe ;
But yet, if strong his arm and
heart,

His courage may do more than art.

XXII

"Of middle air the demons proud,
Who ride upon the racking cloud,
Can read in fixed or wandering
star

The issue of events afar,
But still their sullen aid withhold,
Save when by mightier force con-
trolled.

Such late I summoned to my hall; ³⁹⁹
And though so potent was the call
That scarce the deepest nook of
hell

I deemed a refuge from the spell,
Yet, obstinate in silence still,
The haughty demon mocks my
skill.

But thou,— who little know'st thy
might

As born upon that blessed night
When yawning graves and dying
groan

Proclaimed hell's empire over-
thrown, — ⁴⁰⁹

With untaught valor shalt compel
Response denied to magic spell."

"Gramercy," quoth our monarch
free,

"Place him but front to front with
me,

And, by this good and honored
brand,

The gift of Cœur-de-Lion's hand,
Soothly I swear that, tide what
tide,

The demon shall a buffet bide."

His bearing bold the wizard
viewed,

And thus, well pleased, his speech
renewed:

"There spoke the blood of Mal-
colm!—mark: ⁴²⁰

Forth pacing hence at midnight
dark,

The rampart seek whose circling
crown

Crests the ascent of yonder down:
A southern entrance shalt thou
find;

There halt, and there thy bugle
wind,

And trust thine elfin foe to see
In guise of thy worst enemy.
Couch then thy lance and spur thy
steed —

Upon him! and Saint George to
speed!

If he go down, thou soon shalt
know ⁴³⁰

Whate'er these airy sprites can
show;

If thy heart fail thee in the strife,
I am no warrant for thy life."

XXIII

'Soon as the midnight bell did
ring,

Alone and armed, forth rode the
king

To that old camp's deserted round.
Sir Knight, you well might mark
the mound

Left hand the town,— the Pictish
race

The trench, long since, in blood
did trace;

The moor around is brown and
bare, ⁴⁴⁰

The space within is green and fair.
The spot our village children know,

For there the earliest wild-flowers
grow;

But woe betide the wandering
wight

That treads its circle in the night!
The breadth across, a bowshot

clear,
Gives ample space for full career;

Opposed to the four points of hea-
ven,

By four deep gaps are entrance
given.

The southernmost our monarch
passed, ⁴⁵⁰

Halted, and blew a gallant blast;
And on the north, within the ring,

Appeared the form of England's
king,

Who then, a thousand leagues afar,
In Palestine waged holy war:

Yet arms like England's did he
wield;

Alike the leopards in the shield,
 Alike his Syrian courser's frame,
 The rider's length of limb the same.
 Long afterwards did Scotland
 know 460
 Fell Edward was her deadliest
 foe.

XXIV

'The vision made our monarch
 start,
 But soon he manned his noble
 heart,
 And in the first career they ran,
 The Elfin Knight fell, horse and
 man;
 Yet did a splinter of his lance
 Through Alexander's visor glance
 And razed the skin — a puny
 wound.
 The king, light leaping to the
 ground, 469
 With naked blade his phantom
 foe
 Compelled the future war to show.
 Of Largs he saw the glorious
 plain,
 Where still gigantic bones remain
 Memorial of the Danish war;
 Himself he saw, amid the field,
 On high his brandished war-axe
 wield
 And strike proud Haco from his
 car,
 While all around the shadowy
 kings
 Denmark's grim ravens cowered
 their wings. 479
 'T is said that in that awful night
 Remoter visions met his sight,
 Foreshowing future conquest far,
 When our sons' sons wage North-
 ern war;
 A royal city, tower and spire,
 Reddened the midnight sky with
 fire,
 And shouting crews her navy bore
 Triumphant to the victor shore.
 Such signs may learned clerks
 explain,
 They pass the wit of simple swain.

XXV

'The joyful king turned home
 again, 490
 Headed his host, and quelled the
 Dane;
 But yearly, when returned the
 night
 Of his strange combat with the
 sprite,
 His wound must bleed and
 smart;
 Lord Gifford then would gibing
 say,
 "Bold as ye were, my liege, ye
 pay
 The penance of your start."
 Long since, beneath Dunfermline's
 nave,
 King Alexander fills his grave,
 Our Lady give him rest! 500
 Yet still the knightly spear and
 shield
 The Elfin Warrior doth wield
 Upon the brown hill's breast,
 And many a knight hath proved
 his chance
 In the charmed ring to break a
 lance,
 But all have foully sped;
 Save two, as legends tell, and they
 Were Wallace wight and Gilbert
 Hay. —
 Gentles, my tale is said.'

XXVI

The quaighs were deep, the liquor
 strong, 510
 And on the tale the yeoman-throng
 Had made a comment sage and
 long,
 But Marmion gave a sign:
 And with their lord the squires
 retire,
 The rest around the hostel fire
 Their drowsy limbs recline;
 For pillow, underneath each head,
 The quiver and the targe were laid,
 Deep slumbering on the hostel
 floor,
 Oppressed with toil and ale, they
 snore; 520

The dying flame, in fitful change,
Threw on the group its shadows
strange.

XXVII

Apart, and nestling in the hay
Of a waste loft, Fitz-Eustace lay;
Scarce by the pale moonlight were
seen

The foldings of his mantle green:
Lightly he dreamt, as youth will
dream,

Of sport by thicket, or by stream,
Of hawk or hound, or ring or glove,
Or, lighter yet, of lady's love. 530
A cautious tread his slumber
broke,

And, close beside him when he
woke,

In moonbeam half, and half in
gloom,

Stood a tall form with nodding
plume;

But, ere his dagger Eustace drew,
His master Marmion's voice he
knew:

XXVIII

'Fitz-Eustace! rise, — I cannot
rest;

Yon churl's wild legend haunts my
breast,

And graver thoughts have chafed
my mood;

The air must cool my feverish
blood, 540

And fain would I ride forth to
see

The scene of elfin chivalry.

Arise, and saddle me my steed;

And, gentle Eustace, take good
heed

Thou dost not rouse these drowsy
slaves;

I would not that the prating knaves
Had cause for saying, o'er their
ale,

That I could credit such a tale.'

Then softly down the steps they
slid,

Eustace the stable door undid, 550

And, darkling, Marmion's steed
arrayed,

While, whispering, thus the baron
said: —

XXIX

'Didst never, good my youth, hear
tell

That on the hour when I was
born

Saint George, who graced my sire's
chapelle,

Down from his steed of marble
fell,

A weary wight forlorn?

The flattering chaplains all agree,
The champion left his steed to me.

I would, the omen's truth to
show, 560

That I could meet this elfin foe!
Blithe would I battle for the right

To ask one question at the
sprite. —

Vain thought! for elves, if elves
there be,

An empty race, by fount or sea
To dashing waters dance and sing,

Or round the green oak wheel
their ring.'

Thus speaking, he his steed be-
strode,

And from the hostel slowly rode.

XXX

Fitz-Eustace followed him
abroad, 570

And marked him pace the village
road,

And listened to his horse's
tramp,

Till, by the lessening sound,
He judged that of the Pictish

camp
Lord Marmion sought the

round.
Wonder it seemed, in the squire's

eyes,
That one, so wary held and

wise, —
Of whom 't was said, he scarce re-

ceived

For gospel what the Church believed,—

Should, stirred by idle tale, 580
Ride forth in silence of the night,
As hoping half to meet a sprite,
Arrayed in plate and mail.

For little did Fitz-Eustace know
That passions in contending flow
Unfix the strongest mind;
Wearied from doubt to doubt to flee,

We welcome fond credulity,
Guide confident, though blind.

XXXI

Little for this Fitz-Eustace cared,
But patient waited till he heard
At distance, pricked to utmost speed,

The foot-tramp of a flying steed
Come townward rushing on;
First, dead, as if on turf it trode,
Then, clattering on the village road,—

In other pace than forth he yode,
Returned Lord Marmion.

Down hastily he sprung from selle,
And in his haste wellnigh he fell; 600

To the squire's hand the rein he threw,

And spoke no word as he withdrew:

But yet the moonlight did betray
The falcon-crest was soiled with clay;

And plainly might Fitz-Eustace see,

By stains upon the charger's knee
And his left side, that on the moor
He had not kept his footing sure.
Long musing on these wondrous signs,

At length to rest the squire reclines, 610

Broken and short; for still between

Would dreams of terror intervene:
Eustace did ne'er so blithely mark
The first notes of the morning lark.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO FOURTH

TO JAMES SKENE, ESQ.

Ashestiel, Ettrick Forest

AN ancient Minstrel sagely said,
'Where is the life which late we led?'

That motley clown in Arden wood,
Whom humorous Jaques with envy viewed,

Not even that clown could amplify
On this trite text so long as I.

Eleven years we now may tell
Since we have known each other well,

Since, riding side by side, our hand
First drew the voluntary brand; 10
And sure, through many a varied scene,

Unkindness never came between.
Away these winged years have flown,

To join the mass of ages gone;
And though deep marked, like all below,

With checkered shades of joy and woe,

Though thou o'er realms and seas hast ranged,

Marked cities lost and empires changed,

While here at home my narrower ken

Somewhat of manners saw and men; 20

Though varying wishes, hopes, and fears

Fevered the progress of these years,

Yet now, days, weeks, and months but seem

The recollection of a dream,
So still we glide down to the sea
Of fathomless eternity.

Even now it scarcely seems a day

Since first I tuned this idle lay;
A task so often thrown aside,

When leisure graver cares denied, 30
 That now November's dreary gale,
 Whose voice inspired my opening tale,
 That same November gale once more
 Whirls the dry leaves on Yarrow shore.
 Their vexed boughs streaming to the sky,
 Once more our naked birches sigh,
 And Blackhouse heights and Et-trick Pen
 Have donned their wintry shrouds again,
 And mountain dark and flooded mead
 Bid us forsake the banks of Tweed. 40
 Earlier than wont along the sky,
 Mixed with the rack, the snow mists fly;
 The shepherd who, in summer sun,
 Had something of our envy won,
 As thou with pencil, I with pen,
 The features traced of hill and glen, —
 He who, outstretched the livelong day,
 At ease among the heath-flowers lay,
 Viewed the light clouds with vacant look,
 Or slumbered o'er his tattered book, 50
 Or idly busied him to guide
 His hawk o'er the lessened tide, —
 At midnight now the snowy plain
 Finds sterner labor for the swain.

When red hath set the beamless sun
 Through heavy vapors dank and dun,
 When the tired ploughman, dry and warm,
 Hears, half asleep, the rising storm
 Hurling the hail and sleeted rain

Against the casement's tinkling pane; 60
 The sounds that drive wild deer and fox
 To shelter in the brake and rocks
 Are warnings which the shepherd ask
 To dismal and to dangerous task.
 Oft he looks forth, and hopes, in vain,
 The blast may sink in mellowing rain;
 Till, dark above and white below,
 Decided drives the flaky snow,
 And forth the hardy swain must go.
 Long, with dejected look and whine, 70
 To leave the hearth his dogs re-pine;
 Whistling and cheering them to aid,
 Around his back he wreathes the plaid:
 His flock he gathers and he guides
 To open downs and mountain-sides,
 Where fiercest though the tempest blow,
 Least deeply lies the drift below.
 The blast that whistles o'er the fells
 Stiffens his locks to icicles;
 Oft he looks back while, streaming far, 80
 His cottage window seems a star, —
 Loses its feeble gleam, — and then
 Turns patient to the blast again,
 And, facing to the tempest's sweep,
 Drives through the gloom his lagging sheep.
 If fails his heart, if his limbs fail,
 Benumbing death is in the gale;
 His paths, his landmarks, all unknown,
 Close to the hut, no more his own,
 Close to the aid he sought in vain, 90
 The morn may find the stiffened swain:

The widow sees, at dawning pale,
His orphans raise their feeble
 wail;
And, close beside him in the snow,
Poor Yarrow, partner of their
 woe,
Couches upon his master's breast,
And licks his cheek to break his
 rest.

Who envies now the shepherd's
 lot,
His healthy fare, his rural cot,
His summer couch by greenwood
 tree, 100
His rustic kirk's loud revelry,
His native hill-notes tuned on
 high
To Marmion of the blithesome eye,
His crook, his scrip, his oater
 reed,
And all Arcadia's golden creed?

Changes not so with us, my
 Skene,
Of human life the varying scene?
Our youthful summer oft we see
Dance by on wings of game and
 glee,
While the dark storm reserves its
 rage 110
Against the winter of our age;
As he, the ancient chief of Troy,
His manhood spent in peace and
 joy,
But Grecian fires and loud alarms
Called ancient Priam forth to
 arms.
Then happy those, since each
 must drain
His share of pleasure, share of
 pain, —
Then happy those, beloved of
 Heaven,
To whom the mingled cup is given;
Whose lenient sorrows find re-
 lief, 120
Whose joys are chastened by their
 grief.
And such a lot, my Skene, was
 thine,

When thou of late wert doomed to
 twine —
Just when thy bridal hour was
 by —
The cypress with the myrtle tie.
Just on thy bride her sire had
 smiled,
And blessed the union of his child,
When love must change its joyous
 cheer,
And wipe affection's filial tear.
Nor did the actions next his end
Speak more the father than the
 friend: 131
Scarce had lamented Forbes paid
The tribute to his minstrel's
 shade,
The tale of friendship scarce was
 told,
Ere the narrator's heart was
 cold —
Far may we search before we find
A heart so manly and so kind!
But not around his honored urn
Shall friends alone and kindred
 mourn;
The thousand eyes his care had
 dried 140
Pour at his name a bitter tide,
And frequent falls the grateful
 dew
For benefits the world ne'er knew.
If mortal charity dare claim
The Almighty's attributed name,
Inscribe above his mouldering
 clay,
'The widow's shield, the orphan's
 stay.'
Nor, though it wake thy sorrow,
 deem
My verse intrudes on this sad
 theme,
For sacred was the pen that
 wrote, 150
'Thy father's friend forget thou
 not;'
And grateful title may I plead,
For many a kindly word and deed,
To bring my tribute to his
 grave: —
'T is little — but 't is all I have.

To thee, perchance, this ram-
bling strain
Recalls our summer walks again;
When, doing nought, — and, to
speak true,
Not anxious to find aught to do, —
The wild unbounded hills we
ranged, 160
While oft our talk its topic
changed,
And, desultory as our way,
Ranged unconfined from grave to
gay.
Even when it flagged, as oft will
chance,
No effort made to break its trance,
We could right pleasantly pur-
sue
Our sports in social silence too;
Thou gravely laboring to por-
tray
The blighted oak's fantastic spray,
I spelling o'er with much de-
light
The legend of that antique
knight, 171
Tirante by name, ycleped the
White.
At either's feet a trusty squire,
Pandour and Camp, with eyes of
fire,
Jealous each other's motions
viewed,
And scarce suppressed their an-
cient feud.
The laverock whistled from the
cloud;
The stream was lively, but not
loud;
From the white thorn the May-
flower shed
Its dewy fragrance round our
head: 180
Not Ariel lived more merrily
Under the blossomed bough than
we.

And blithesome nights, too, have
been ours,
When Winter stript the Summer's
bowers.

Careless we heard, what now I
hear,
The wild blast sighing deep and
drear,
When fires were bright and lamps
beamed gay,
And ladies tuned the lovely lay,
And he was held a laggard soul
Who shunned to quaff the spar-
kling bowl. 190
Then he whose absence we de-
plore,
Who breathes the gales of Devon's
shore,
The longer missed, bewailed the
more,
And thou, and I, and dear-loved
Rae,
And one whose name I may not
say, —
For not mimosa's tender tree
Shrinks sooner from the touch
than he, —
In merry chorus well combined,
With laughter drowned the whis-
tling wind.
Mirth was within, and Care with-
out 200
Might gnaw her nails to hear our
shout.
Not but amid the buxom scene
Some grave discourse might inter-
vene —
Of the good horse that bore him
best,
His shoulder, hoof, and arching
crest;
For, like mad Tom's, our chiefest
care
Was horse to ride and weapon
wear.
Such nights we've had; and,
though the game
Of manhood be more sober tame,
And though the field-day or the
drill 210
Seem less important now, yet
still
Such may we hope to share again.
The sprightly thought inspires my
strain!

And mark how, like a horseman
true,
Lord Marmion's march I thus re-
new.

CANTO FOURTH

THE CAMP

I

EUSTACE, I said, did blithely mark
The first notes of the merry lark.
The lark sang shrill, the cock he
crew,

And loudly Marmion's bugles blew,
And with their light and lively call
Brought groom and yeoman to the
stall.

Whistling they came and free of
heart,

But soon their mood was
changed;

Complaint was heard on every
part

Of something disarranged. 10
Some clamored loud for armor
lost;

Some brawled and wrangled with
the host;

'By Becket's bones,' cried one, 'I
fear

That some false Scot has stolen
my spear!'

Young Blount, Lord Marmion's
second squire,

Found his steed wet with sweat
and mire,

Although the rated horseboy
sware

Last night he dressed him sleek
and fair.

While chafed the impatient squire
like thunder,

Old Hubert shouts in fear and
wonder, 20

'Help, gentle Blount! help, com-
rades all!

Bevis lies dying in his stall;

To Marmion who the plight dare
tell

Of the good steed he loves so
well?'

Gaping for fear and ruth, they
saw

The charger panting on his straw;
Till one, who would seem wisest,
cried,

'What else but evil could betide,
With that cursed Palmer for our
guide?

Better we had through mire and
bush 30

Been lantern-led by Friar Rush.'

II

Fitz-Eustace, who the cause but
guessed,

Nor wholly understood,
His comrades' clamorous complaints
suppressed;

He knew Lord Marmion's mood.
Him, ere he issued forth, he
sought,

And found deep plunged in gloomy
thought,

And did his tale display
Simply, as if he knew of nought
'To cause such disarray. 40

Lord Marmion gave attention cold,
Nor marvelled at the wonders
told,—

Passed them as accidents of
course,

And bade his clarions sound to
horse.

III

Young Henry Blount, meanwhile,
the cost

Had reckoned with their Scottish
host;

And, as the charge he cast and
paid,

'Ill thou deserv'st thy hire,' he
said;

'Dost see, thou knave, my horse's
plight?

Fairies have ridden him all the
night, 50

And left him in a foam!

I trust that soon a conjuring band,

With English cross and blazing
brand,
Shall drive the devils from this
land

To their infernal home ;
For in this haunted den, I trow,
All night they trampled to and fro.
The laughing host looked on the
hire :

'Gramercy, gentle southern squire,
And if thou com'st among the
rest,

With Scottish broadsword to be
blest,

Sharp be the brand, and sure the
blow,

And short the pang to undergo.'
Here stayed their talk, for Mar-
mion

Gave now the signal to set on.

The Palmer showing forth the
way,

They journeyed all the morning-
day.

IV

The greensward way was smooth
and good,

Through Humble's and through
Saltoun's wood ;

A forest glade, which, varying
still,

Here gave a view of dale and hill,
There narrower closed till over-
head

A vaulted screen the branches
made.

'A pleasant path,' Fitz-Eustace
said ;

'Such as where errant knights
might see

Adventures of high chivalry,
Might meet some damsel flying
fast,

With hair unbound and looks
aghast ;

And smooth and level course were
here,

In her defence to break a spear.
Here, too, are twilight nooks and
dells ;

And oft in such, the story tells,
The damsel kind, from danger
freed,

Did grateful pay her champion's
meed.'

He spoke to cheer Lord Marmion's
mind,

Perchance to show his lore de-
signed ;

For Eustace much had pored
Upon a huge romantic tome,
In the hall-window of his home,
Imprinted at the antique dome 90
Of Caxton or de Worde.

Therefore he spoke, — but spoke
in vain,

For Marmion answered nought
again.

V

Now sudden, distant trumpets
shrill,

In notes prolonged by wood and
hill,

Were heard to echo far ;
Each ready archer grasped his
bow,

But by the flourish soon they
know

They breathed no point of war.
Yet cautious, as in foeman's
land,

Lord Marmion's order speeds the
band

Some opener ground to gain ;
And scarce a furlong had they
rode,

When thinner trees receding
showed

A little woodland plain.
Just in that advantageous glade
The halting troop a line had made,
As forth from the opposing shade
Issued a gallant train.

VI

First came the trumpets, at whose
clang

So late the forest echoes rang ;
On prancing steeds they forward
pressed,

With scarlet mantle, azure vest ;
Each at his trump a banner wore,
Which Scotland's royal scutcheon
bore :

Heralds and pursuivants, by name
Bute, Islay, Marchmount, Rothsay,
came,

In painted tabards, proudly show-
ing

Gules, argent, or, and azure glow-
ing,

Attendant on a king-at-arms, ¹²⁰
Whose hand the armorial trun-
cheon held

That feudal strife had often
quelled

When wildest its alarms.

VII

He was a man of middle age,
In aspect manly, grave, and sage,

As on king's errand come ;
But in the glances of his eye
A penetrating, keen, and sly

Expression found its home ;
The flash of that satiric rage ¹³⁰

Which, bursting on the early
stage,

Branded the vices of the age,
And broke the keys of Rome.

On milk-white palfrey forth he
paced ;

His cap of maintenance was graced
With the proud heron-plume.

From his steed's shoulder, loin,
and breast,

Silk housings swept the ground,
With Scotland's arms, device, and

crest, ¹³⁹
Embroidered round and round.

The double tressure might you see,
First by Achaius borne,

The thistle and the fleur-de-lis,
And gallant unicorn.

So bright the king's armorial coat
That scarce the dazzled eye could
note,

In living colors blazoned brave,
The Lion, which his title gave ;

A train, which well beseemed his
state,

But all unarmed, around him
wait. ¹⁵⁰

Still is thy name in high account,
And still thy verse has charms,
Sir David Lindesay of the Mount,
Lord Lion King-at-arms !

VIII

Down from his horse did Marmion
spring

Soon as he saw the Lion-King ;
For well the stately baron knew

To him such courtesy was due
Whom royal James himself had
crowned,

And on his temples placed the
round ¹⁶⁰

Of Scotland's ancient diadem,
And wet his brow with hallowed
wine,

And on his finger given to shine
The emblematic gem.

Their mutual greetings duly made,
The Lion thus his message said :—

' Though Scotland's King hath
deeply swore

Ne'er to knit faith with Henry
more,

And strictly hath forbid resort
From England to his royal

court, ¹⁷⁰

Yet, for he knows Lord Marmion's
name

And honors much his warlike
fame,

My liege hath deemed it shame
and lack

Of courtesy to turn him back ;
And by his order I, your guide,

Must lodging fit and fair provide
Till finds King James meet time

to see
The flower of English chivalry.'

IX

Though inly chafed at this delay,
Lord Marmion bears it as he

may. ¹⁸⁰

The Palmer, his mysterious guide,
Beholding thus his place supplied,
Sought to take leave in vain ;

Strict was the Lion-King's command
That none who rode in Marmion's band

Should sever from the train.
'England has here enow of spies
In Lady Heron's witching eyes:'
To Marchmount thus apart he said,

But fair pretext to Marmion made. 190

The right-hand path they now decline,
And trace against the stream the Tyne.

X

At length up that wild dale they wind,

Where Crichtoun Castle crowns the bank;

For there the Lion's care assigned
A lodging meet for Marmion's rank.

That castle rises on the steep
Of the green vale of Tyne;
And far beneath, where slow they creep

From pool to eddy, dark and deep, 200

Where alders moist and willows weep,

You hear her streams repine.

The towers in different ages rose,
Their various architecture shows

The builders' various hands;
A mighty mass, that could oppose,
When deadliest hatred fired its foes,

The vengeful Douglas bands.

XI

Crichtoun! though now thy miry court

But pens the lazy steer and sheep, 210

Thy turrets rude and tottered keep

Have been the minstrel's loved resort.

Off have I traced, within thy fort,

Of mouldering shields the mystic sense,

Scutcheons of honor or pretence,
Quartered in old armorial sort,

Remains of rude magnificence.

Nor wholly yet hath time defaced
Thy lordly gallery fair, 219

Nor yet the stony cord unbraced
Whose twisted knots, with roses laced,

Adorn thy ruined stair.

Still rises unimpaired below

The court-yard's graceful portico;

Above its cornice, row and row

Of fair hewn facets richly show

Their pointed diamond form,
Though there but houseless cattle go,

To shield them from the storm.

And, shuddering, still may we explore, 230

Where oft whilom were captives pent,

The darkness of thy Massy More,
Or, from thy grass-grown battlement,

May trace in undulating line

The sluggish mazes of the Tyne.

XII

Another aspect Crichtoun showed
As through its portal Marmion rode;

But yet 't was melancholy state

Received him at the outer gate,

For none were in the castle then

But women, boys, or aged men. 241

With eyes scarce dried, the sorrowing dame

To welcome noble Marmion came;
Her son, a stripling twelve years old,

Proffered the baron's rein to hold;
For each man that could draw a sword

Had marched that morning with their lord,

Earl Adam Hepburn, — he who died

On Flodden by his sovereign's side.

Long may his lady look in vain! 250
 She ne'er shall see his gallant
 train
 Come sweeping back through
 Crichtoun-Dean.
 'T was a brave race before the
 name
 Of hated Bothwell stained their
 fame.

XIII

And here two days did Marmion
 rest,
 With every right that honor
 claims,
 Attended as the king's own
 guest;—
 Such the command of Royal
 James,
 Who marshalled then his land's
 array, 259
 Upon the Borough-moor that lay.
 Perchance he would not foeman's
 eye
 Upon his gathering host should pry,
 Till full prepared was every band
 To march against the English
 land.
 Here while they dwelt, did Linde-
 say's wit
 Oft cheer the baron's moodier fit;
 And, in his turn, he knew to prize
 Lord Marmion's powerful mind
 and wise,—
 Trained in the lore of Rome and
 Greece,
 And policies of war and peace. 270

XIV

It chanced, as fell the second night,
 That on the battlements they
 walked,
 And by the slowly fading light
 Of varying topics talked;
 And, unaware, the herald-bard
 Said Marmion might his toil have
 spared
 In travelling so far,
 For that a messenger from heaven
 In vain to James had counsel
 given

Against the English war; 280
 And, closer questioned, thus he
 told
 A tale which chronicles of old
 In Scottish story have enrolled:—

XV

SIR DAVID LINDESAY'S TALE

'Of all the palaces so fair,
 Built for the royal dwelling
 In Scotland, far beyond compare
 Linlithgow is excelling;
 And in its park, in jovial June,
 How sweet the merry linnet's tune,
 How blithe the blackbird's
 lay! 290
 The wild buck bells from ferny
 brake,
 The coot dives merry on the lake,
 The saddest heart might pleasure
 take
 To see all nature gay.
 But June is to our sovereign dear
 The heaviest month in all the
 year;
 Too well his cause of grief you
 know,
 June saw his father's overthrow.
 Woe to the traitors who could
 bring 299
 The princely boy against his king!
 Still in his conscience burns the
 sting.
 In offices as strict as Lent
 King James's June is ever spent.

XVI

'When last this ruthless month was
 come,
 And in Linlithgow's holy dome
 The king, as wont, was pray-
 ing;
 While for his royal father's soul
 The chanter's sung, the bells did
 toll,
 The bishop mass was saying—
 For now the year brought round
 again 310
 The day the luckless king was
 slain—

In Catherine's aisle the monarch
knelt,
With sackcloth shirt and iron belt,
And eyes with sorrow stream-
ing;

Around him in their stalls of state
The Thistle's Knight-Companions
sate,

Their banners o'er them beam-
ing.

I too was there, and, sooth to tell,
Bedeafened with the jangling
knell,

Was watching where the sun-
beams fell, 320

Through the stained casement
gleaming;

But while I marked what next be-
fell

It seemed as I were dreaming.
Stepped from the crowd a ghostly
wight,

In azure gown, with cincture
white;

His forehead bald, his head was
bare,

Down hung at length his yellow
hair. —

Now, mock me not when, good my
lord,

I pledge to you my knightly word
That when I saw his placid
grace, 330

His simple majesty of face,
His solemn bearing, and his pace

So stately gliding on, —

Seemed to me ne'er did limner
paint

So just an image of the saint

Who propped the Virgin in her
faint,

The loved Apostle John!

XVII

'He stepped before the monarch's
chair,

And stood with rustic plainness
there,

And little reverence made; 340
Nor head, nor body, bowed, nor
bent,

But on the desk his arm he leant,
And words like these he said,
In a low voice, — but never tone
So thrilled through vein, and nerve,
and bone: —

"My mother sent me from afar,
Sir King, to warn thee not to
war, —

Woe waits on thine array;
If war thou wilt, of woman fair,
Her witching wiles and wanton
snare, 350

James Stuart, doubly warned, be-
ware:

God keep thee as he may!"
The wondering monarch seemed
to seek

For answer, and found none;
And when he raised his head to
speak,

The monitor was gone.
The marshal and myself had
cast

To stop him as he outward passed;
But, lighter than the whirlwind's
blast,

He vanished from our eyes, 360
Like sunbeam on the billow cast,
That glances but, and dies.'

XVIII

While Lindesay told his marvel
strange

The twilight was so pale,
He marked not Marmion's color
change

While listening to the tale;
But, after a suspended pause,
The baron spoke: 'Of Nature's
laws

So strong I held the force,
That never superhuman cause 370

Could e'er control their course,
And, three days since, had judged
your aim

Was but to make your guest your
game;

But I have seen, since past the
Tweed,

What much has changed my scep-
tic creed,

And made me credit aught.' — He
 stayed,
 And seemed to wish his words un-
 said,
 But, by that strong emotion
 pressed
 Which prompts us to unload our
 breast

Even when discovery's pain, ³⁸⁰
 To Lindsay did at length unfold
 The tale his village host had told,
 At Gifford, to his train.
 Nought of the Palmer says he
 there,
 And nought of Constance or of
 Clare;
 The thoughts which broke his sleep
 he seems
 To mention but as feverish
 dreams.

XIX

'In vain,' said he, 'to rest I spread
 My burning limbs, and couched
 my head;
 Fantastic thoughts returned, ³⁹⁰
 And, by their wild dominion led,
 My heart within me burned.
 So sore was the delirious goad,
 I took my steed and forth I rode,
 And, as the moon shone bright and
 cold,
 Soon reached the camp upon the
 wold.
 The southern entrance I passed
 through,
 And halted, and my bugle blew.
 Methought an answer met my
 ear, —
 Yet was the blast so low and
 drear, ⁴⁰⁰
 So hollow, and so faintly blown,
 It might be echo of my own.

XX

'Thus judging, for a little space
 I listened ere I left the place,
 But scarce could trust my eyes,
 Nor yet can think they serve me
 true,
 When sudden in the ring I view,

In form distinct of shape and
 hue,
 A mounted champion rise. —
 I've fought, Lord-Lion, many a
 day, ⁴¹⁰
 In single fight and mixed affray,
 And ever, I myself may say,
 Have borne me as a knight;
 But when this unexpected foe
 Seemed starting from the gulf be-
 low, —
 I care not though the truth I
 show, —
 I trembled with affright;
 And as I placed in rest my spear,
 My hand so shook for very fear,
 I scarce could couch it right. ⁴²⁰

XXI

'Why need my tongue the issue
 tell?
 We ran our course, — my charger
 fell; —
 What could he 'gainst the shock
 of hell?
 I rolled upon the plain.
 High o'er my head with threaten-
 ing hand
 The spectre shook his naked
 brand, —
 Yet did the worst remain:
 My dazzled eyes I upward cast, —
 Not opening hell itself could blast
 Their sight like what I saw! ⁴³⁰
 Full on his face the moonbeam
 strook! —
 A face could never be mistook!
 I knew the stern vindictive look,
 And held my breath for awe.
 I saw the face of one who, fled
 To foreign climes, has long been
 dead, —
 I well believe the last;
 For ne'er from visor raised did
 stare
 A human warrior with a glare
 So grimly and so ghast. ⁴⁴⁰
 Thrice o'er my head he shook the
 blade;
 But when to good Saint George I
 prayed, —

The first time e'er I asked his
aid,—

He plunged it in the sheath,
And, on his courser mountain light,
He seemed to vanish from my
sight:

The moonbeam drooped, and deep-
est night

Sunk down upon the heath. —
'T were long to tell what cause I
have

To know his face that met me
there, 450

Called by his hatred from the
grave

To cumber upper air;
Dead or alive, good cause had he
To be my mortal enemy.'

XXII

Marvelled Sir David of the Mount;
Then, learned in story, gan re-
count

Such chance had happed of old,
When once, near Norham, there
did fight

A spectre fell of fiendish might,
In likeness of a Scottish knight, 460

With Brian Bulmer bold,
And trained him nigh to disallow
The aid of his baptismal vow.

'And such a phantom, too, 't is
said,

With Highland broadsword, targe,
and plaid,

And fingers red with gore,
Is seen in Rothiemurcus glade,
Or where the sable pine-trees
shade

Dark Tomantoul, and Auchnas-
laid,

Dromouchty, or Glenmore. 470
And yet, whate'er such legends
say

Of warlike demon, ghost, or fay,
On mountain, moor, or plain,
Spotless in faith, in bosom bold,
True son of chivalry should hold
These midnight terrors vain;

For seldom have such spirits
power

To harm, save in the evil hour
When guilt we meditate within
Or harbor unrepented sin.' — 480
Lord Marmion turned him half
aside,

And twice to clear his voice he
tried,

Then pressed Sir David's hand, —
But nought, at length, in answer
said;

And here their further converse
stayed,

Each ordering that his band
Should bowne them with the ris-
ing day,

To Scotland's camp to take their
way, —

Such was the king's command.

XXIII

Early they took Dun-Edin's road,
And I could trace each step they
trode; 491

Hill, brook, nor dell, nor rock, nor
stone,

Lies on the path to me unknown.
Much might it boast of storied
lore;

But, passing such digression o'er,
Suffice it that their route was
laid

Across the furzy hills of Braid.
They passed the glen and scanty
rill,

And climbed the opposing bank,
until

They gained the top of Blackford
Hill. 500

XXIV

Blackford! on whose uncultured
breast,

Among the broom and thorn and
whin,

A truant-boy, I sought the nest,
Or listed, as I lay at rest,

While rose on breezes thin
The murmur of the city crowd,
And, from his steeple jangling loud,
Saint Giles's mingling din.

Now, from the summit to the plain,

Waves all the hill with yellow
grain; 510
And o'er the landscape as I
look,
Nought do I see unchanged re-
main,
Save the rude cliffs and chiming
brook.
To me they make a heavy moan
Of early friendships past and gone.

XXV

But different far the change has
been,
Since Marmion from the crown
Of Blackford saw that martial
scene
Upon the bent so brown:
Thousand pavilions, white as
snow, 520
Spread all the Borough-moor be-
low,
Upland, and dale, and down.
A thousand did I say? I ween,
Thousands on thousands there
were seen,
That checkered all the heath be-
tween
The streamlet and the town,
In crossing ranks extending far,
Forming a camp irregular;
Oft giving way where still there
stood
Some relics of the old oak
wood, 530
That darkly huge did intervene
And tamed the glaring white with
green:
In these extended lines there lay
A martial kingdom's vast array.

XXVI

For from Hebudes, dark with rain,
To eastern Lodon's fertile plain,
And from the southern Redwire
edge
To furthest Rosse's rocky ledge,
From west to east, from south to
north,
Scotland sent all her warriors
forth. 540

Marmion might hear the mingled
hum
Of myriads up the mountain
come,—
The horses' tramp and tinkling
clank,
Where chiefs reviewed their vassal
rank,
And charger's shrilling neigh,—
And see the shifting lines advance,
While frequent flashed from shield
and lance
The sun's reflected ray.

XXVII

Thin curling in the morning air,
The wreaths of failing smoke de-
clare 550
To embers now the brands decayed,
Where the night-watch their fires
had made.
They saw, slow rolling on the
plain,
Full many a baggage-cart and wain,
And dire artillery's clumsy car,
By sluggish oxen tugged to war;
And there were Borthwick's Sis-
ters Seven,
And culverins which France had
given.
Ill-omened gift! the guns remain
The conqueror's spoil on Flodden
plain. 560

XXVIII

Nor marked they less where in the
air
A thousand streamers flaunted
fair;
Various in shape, device, and
hue,
Green, sanguine, purple, red, and
blue,
Broad, narrow, swallow-tailed, and
square,
Scroll, pennon, pencil, bandrol,
there
O'er the pavilions flew.
Highest and midmost, was de-
scribed
The royal banner floating wide;

The staff, a pine-tree, strong and
 straight, 570
 Pitched deeply in a massive
 stone,
 Which still in memory is
 shown,
 Yet bent beneath the standard's
 weight,
 Whene'er the western wind
 unrolled
 With toil the huge and cum-
 brous fold,
 And gave to view the dazzling
 field,
 Where in proud Scotland's royal
 shield
 The ruddy lion ramped in gold.

XXIX

Lord Marmion viewed the land-
 scape bright, 579
 He viewed it with a chief's delight,
 Until within him burned his
 heart,
 And lightning from his eye did
 part,
 As on the battle-day;
 Such glance did falcon never
 dart
 When stooping on his prey.
 'Oh! well, Lord-Lion, hast thou
 said,
 Thy king from warfare to dissuade
 Were but a vain essay;
 For, by Saint George, were that
 host mine,
 Not power infernal nor divine 590
 Should once to peace my soul in-
 cline,
 Till I had dimmed their armor's
 shine
 In glorious battle-fray!'
 Answered the bard, of milder
 mood:
 'Fair is the sight, — and yet 't were
 good
 That kings would think withal,
 When peace and wealth their land
 has blessed,
 'T is better to sit still at rest
 Than rise, perchance to fall.'

XXX

Still on the spot Lord Marmion
 stayed, 600
 For fairer scene he ne'er surveyed.
 When sated with the martial show
 That peopled all the plain below,
 The wandering eye could o'er it go,
 And mark the distant city glow
 With gloomy splendor red;
 For on the smoke-wreaths, huge
 and slow,
 That round her sable turrets flow,
 The morning beams were shed,
 And tinged them with a lustre
 proud, 610
 Like that which streaks a thunder-
 cloud.
 Such dusky grandeur clothed the
 height
 Where the huge castle holds its
 state,
 And all the steep slope down,
 Whose ridgy back heaves to the
 sky,
 Piled deep and massy, close and
 high,
 Mine own romantic town!
 But northward far, with purer
 blaze,
 On Ochil mountains fell the rays,
 And as each heathy top they
 kissed, 620
 It gleamed a purple amethyst.
 Yonder the shores of Fife you
 saw,
 Here Preston-Bay and Berwick-
 Law;
 And, broad between them rolled,
 The gallant Firth the eye might
 note,
 Whose islands on its bosom float,
 Like emeralds chased in gold.
 Fitz-Eustace' heart felt closely
 pent;
 As if to give his rapture vent, 629
 The spur he to his charger lent,
 And raised his bridle hand,
 And making demi-volt in air,
 Cried, 'Where's the coward that
 would not dare
 To fight for such a land!

The Lindesay smiled his joy to see,
Nor Marmion's frown repressed his glee.

XXXI

Thus while they looked, a flourish proud,
Where mingled trump, and clarion loud,

And fife, and kettle-drum, 639
And sackbut deep, and psaltery,
And war-pipe with discordant cry,
And cymbal clattering to the sky,
Making wild music bold and high,

Did up the mountain come ;
The whilst the bells with distant chime

Merrily tolled the hour of prime,

And thus the Lindesay spoke :

' Thus clamor still the war-notes when

The king to mass his way has ta'en, 649

Or to Saint Catherine's of Sienne,

Or Chapel of Saint Rocque.

To you they speak of martial fame,
But me remind of peaceful game,

When blither was their cheer,
Thrilling in Falkland-woods the air,

In signal none his steed should spare,

But strive which foremost might repair

To the downfall of the deer.

XXXII

' Nor less,' he said, ' when looking forth 659

I view yon Empress of the North
Sit on her hilly throne,

Her palace's imperial bowers,
Her castle, proof to hostile powers,
Her stately halls and holy towers —

Nor less,' he said, ' I moan
To think what woe mischance may bring,

And how these merry bells may ring

The death-dirge of our gallant king,

Or with their larum call
The burghers forth to watch and ward, 670

'Gainst Southern sack and fires to guard

Dun-Edin's leaguered wall. —
But not for my presaging thought,
Dream conquest sure or cheaply bought !

Lord Marmion, I say nay :
God is the guider of the field,
He breaks the champion's spear and shield ;

But thou thyself shalt say,
When joins yon host in deadly stowre,

That England's dames must weep in bower, 680

Her monks the death-mass sing ;
For never saw'st thou such a power
Led on by such a king.'

And now, down winding to the plain,

The barriers of the camp they gain,

And there they made a stay. —
There stays the Minstrel, till he fling

His hand o'er every Border string,
And fit his harp the pomp to sing

Of Scotland's ancient court and king, 690

In the succeeding lay.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO FIFTH

TO GEORGE ELLIS, ESQ.

Edinburgh

WHEN dark December glooms the day,

And takes our autumn joys away ;
When short and scant the sun-beam throws

Upon the weary waste of snows
A cold and profitless regard,
Like patron on a needy bard ;

When sylvan occupation 's done,
 And o'er the chimney rests the
 gun,
 And hang in idle trophy near,
 The game-pouch, fishing-rod, and
 spear; 10
 When wiry terrier, rough and
 grim
 And greyhound, with his length
 of limb,
 And pointer, now employed no
 more,
 Cumber our parlor's narrow floor;
 When in his stall the impatient
 steed
 Is long condemned to rest and
 feed;
 When from our snow-encircled
 home
 Scarce cares the hardiest step to
 roam,
 Since path is none, save that to
 bring
 The needful water from the spring;
 When wrinkled news-page, thrice
 conned o'er, 21
 Beguiles the dreary hour no more,
 And darkling politician, crossed,
 Inveighs against the lingering
 post,
 And answering housewife sore
 complains
 Of carriers' snow - impeded
 wains;—
 When such the country-cheer, I
 come
 Well pleased to seek our city
 home;
 For converse and for books to
 change
 The Forest's melancholy range, 30
 And welcome with renewed de-
 light
 The busy day and social night.

Not here need my desponding
 rhyme
 Lament the ravages of time,
 As erst by Newark's riven towers,
 And Ettrick stripped of forest
 bowers.

True, Caledonia's Queen is
 changed
 Since on her dusky summit ranged,
 Within its steepy limits pent
 By bulwark, line, and battlement,
 And flanking towers, and laky
 flood, 41
 Guarded and garrisoned she
 stood,
 Denying entrance or resort
 Save at each tall embattled port,
 Above whose arch, suspended,
 hung
 Portcullis spiked with iron prong.
 That long is gone,—but not so
 long
 Since, early closed and opening
 late,
 Jealous revolved the studded gate,
 Whose task, from eve to morning
 tide, 50
 A wicket churlishly supplied.
 Stern then and steel-girt was thy
 brow,
 Dun-Edin! Oh, how altered now,
 When safe amid thy mountain
 court
 Thou sitt'st, like empress at her
 sport,
 And liberal, unconfined, and free,
 Flinging thy white arms to the
 sea,
 For thy dark cloud, with umbered
 lower,
 That hung o'er cliff and lake and
 tower,
 Thou gleam'st against the western
 ray 60
 Ten thousand lines of brighter
 day!

Not she, the championess of old,
 In Spenser's magic tale enrolled,
 She for the charmed spear re-
 nowned,
 Which forced each knight to kiss
 the ground,—
 Not she more changed, when,
 placed at rest,
 What time she was Malbecco's
 guest,

She gave to flow her maiden vest ;
 When, from the corselet's grasp
 relieved,
 Free to the sight her bosom
 heaved : 70
 Sweet was her blue eye's modest
 smile,
 Erst hidden by the aventayle,
 And down her shoulders graceful
 rolled
 Her locks profuse of paly gold.
 They who whilom in midnight
 fight
 Had marvelled at her matchless
 might,
 No less her maiden charms ap-
 proved,
 But looking liked, and liking loved.
 The sight could jealous pangs be-
 guile,
 And charm Malbecco's cares
 awhile ; 80
 And he, the wandering Squire of
 Dames
 Forgot his Columbella's claims,
 And passion, erst unknown, could
 gain
 The breast of blunt Sir Satyrane ;
 Nor durst light Paridell advance,
 Bold as he was, a looser glance.
 She charmed, at once, and tamed
 the heart,
 Incomparable Britomart !

So thou, fair City ! disarrayed
 Of battled wall and rampart's aid,
 As stately seem'st, but lovelier
 far 91
 Than in that panoply of war.
 Nor deem that from thy fenceless
 throne
 Strength and security are flown ;
 Still as of yore, Queen of the
 North !
 Still canst thou send thy children
 forth.
 Ne'er readier at alarm-bell's call
 Thy burghers rose to man thy
 wall
 Than now, in danger, shall be
 thine,

Thy dauntless voluntary line : 100
 For fosse and turret proud to
 stand,
 Their breasts the bulwarks of the
 land.
 Thy thousands, trained to martial
 toil,
 Full red would stain their native
 soil,
 Ere from thy mural crown there
 fell
 The slightest knosp ~~in~~ pinnacle.
 And if it come, as come it may,
 Dun-Edin ! that eventful day,
 Renowned for hospitable deed,
 That virtue much with Heaven
 may plead, 110
 In patriarchal times whose care
 Descending angels deigned to
 share ;
 That claim may wrestle blessings
 down
 On those who fight for the Good
 Town,
 Destined in every age to be
 Refuge of injured royalty ;
 Since first, when conquering York
 arose,
 To Henry meek she gave repose,
 Till late, with wonder, grief, and
 awe,
 Great Bourbon's relics sad she
 saw. 120

Truce to these thoughts !— for,
 as they rise,
 How gladly I avert mine eyes,
 Bodings, or true or false, to change
 For Fiction's fair romantic range,
 Or for tradition's dubious light,
 That hovers 'twixt the day and
 night :
 Dazzling alternately and dim,
 Her wavering lamp I'd rather
 trim,
 Knights, squires, and lovely dames
 to see,
 Creation of my fantasy, 130
 Than gaze abroad on reeky fen,
 And make of mists invading
 men.—

Who loves not more the night of
 June
 Than dull December's gloomy
 noon?
 The moonlight than the fog of
 frost?
 And can we say which cheats the
 most?

But who shall teach my harp to
 gain
 A sound of the romantic strain
 Whose Anglo-Norman tones whil-
 ere

Could win the royal Henry's ear,
 Famed Beauclerk called, for that
 he loved 141
 The minstrel and his lay approved?
 Who shall these lingering notes re-
 deem,

Decaying on Oblivion's stream;
 Such notes as from the Breton
 tongue

Marie translated, Blondel sung? —
 Oh! born Time's ravage to repair,
 And make the dying Muse thy
 care;

Who, when his scythe her hoary
 foe

Was poising for the final blow, 150
 The weapon from his hand could
 wring,

And break his glass and shear his
 wing,

And bid, reviving in his strain,
 The gentle poet live again;

Thou, who canst give to lightest
 lay

An unpedantic moral gay,
 Nor less the dullest theme bid flit
 On wings of unexpected wit;
 In letters as in life approved, 150
 Example honored and beloved, —
 Dear ELLIS! to the bard impart
 A lesson of thy magic art,
 To win at once the head and
 heart, —

At once to charm, instruct, and
 mend,

My guide, my pattern, and my
 friend!

Such minstrel lesson to bestow
 Be long thy pleasing task, — but
 oh!

No more by thy example teach
 What few can practise, all can
 preach, —

With even patience to endure 170
 Lingering disease and painful cure,
 And boast affliction's pangs sub-
 dued

By mild and manly fortitude.
 Enough, the lesson has been given;
 Forbid the repetition, Heaven!

Come listen, then! for thou hast
 known

And loved the Minstrel's varying
 tone,

Who, like his Border sires of old,
 Waked a wild measure rude and
 bold,

Till Windsor's oaks and Ascot
 plain 180

With wonder heard the Northern
 strain.

Come listen! bold in thy applause,
 The bard shall scorn pedantic
 laws;

And, as the ancient art could stain
 Achievements on the storied pane,
 Irregularly traced and planned,
 But yet so glowing and so grand,
 So shall he strive, in changeful
 hue,

Field, feast, and combat to renew,
 And loves, and arms, and harpers'
 glee, 190

And all the pomp of chivalry.

CANTO FIFTH

THE COURT

I

THE train has left the hills of
 Braid;

The barrier guard have open
 made —

So Lindesay bade — the palisade
 That closed the tented ground;

Their men the warders backward
drew,

And carried pikes as they rode
through

Into its ample bound.

Fast ran the Scottish warriors
there,

Upon the Southern band to stare,
And envy with their wonder rose,

To see such well-appointed foes;
Such length of shafts, such mighty

bows,

So huge that many simply thought
But for a vaunt such weapons

wrought,

And little deemed their force to
feel

Through links of mail and plates
of steel

When, rattling upon Flodden vale,
The cloth-yard arrows flew like

hail.

II

Nor less did Marmion's skilful
view

Glance every line and squadron
through,

20

And much he marvelled one small
land

Could marshal forth such various
band;

For men-at-arms were here,
Heavily sheathed in mail and plate.

Like iron towers for strength and
weight,

On Flemish steeds of bone and
height,

With battle-axe and spear.

Young knights and squires, a
lighter train,

Practised their chargers on the
plain,

By aid of leg, of hand, and rein, 30
Each warlike feat to show,

To pass, to wheel, the croupe to
gain,

And high curvet, that not in vain
The sword-sway might descend

amain

On foeman's casque below.

He saw the hardy burghers there
March armed on foot with faces
bare,

For visor they wore none.

Nor waving plume, nor crest of
knight;

But burnished were their corse-
lets bright,

40

Their brigantines and gorgets
light

Like very silver shone.

Long pikes they had for standing
fight,

Two-handed swords they wore,
And many wielded mace of weight,

And bucklers bright they bore.

III

On foot the yeoman too, but
dressed

In his steel-jack, a swarthy vest,
With iron quilted well;

Each at his back — a slender
store —

50

His forty days' provision bore,
As feudal statutes tell.

His arms were halbert, axe, or
spear,

A crossbow there, a hagbut here,
A dagger-knife, and brand,

Sober he seemed and sad of cheer,
As loath to leave his cottage dear

And march to foreign strand,
Or musing who would guide his

steer

To till the fallow land. 60
Yet deem not in his thoughtful

eye

Did aught of dastard terror lie;
More dreadful far his ire

Than theirs who, scorning dan-
ger's name,

In eager mood to battle came,
Their valor like light straw on

flame,

A fierce but fading fire.

IV

Not so the Borderer: — bred to
war,

He knew the battle's din afar,

And joyed to hear it swell. 70
His peaceful day was slothful
ease;
Nor harp nor pipe his ear could
please

Like the loud slogan yell.
On active steed, with lance and
blade,
The light-armed pricker plied his
trade, —

Let nobles fight for fame;
Let vassals follow where they
lead,
Burghers, to guard their townships,
bleed,

But war's the Borderers' game.
Their gain, their glory, their de-
light, 80
To sleep the day, maraud the
night,

O'er mountain, moss, and moor;
Joyful to fight they took their
way,
Scarce caring who might win the
day,

Their booty was secure.
These, as Lord Marmion's train
passed by,
Looked on at first with careless
eye,
Nor marvelled aught, well taught
to know

The form and force of English
bow,

But when they saw the lord ar-
rayed 90

In splendid arms and rich bro-
cade,

Each Borderer to his kinsman
said, —

'Hist, Ringan! seest thou there?
Canst guess which road they'll
homeward ride?

Oh! could we but on Border
side,

By Eusedale glen, or Liddell's tide,
Beset a prize so fair!

That fangless Lion, too, their
guide,

Might chance to lose his glistening
hide;

Brown Maudlin of that doublet
pied 100
Could make a kirtle rare.'

V

Next, Marmion marked the Celtic
race,
Of different language, form, and
face,

A various race of man;
Just then the chiefs their tribes
arrayed,
And wild and garish semblance
made
The checkered trews and belted
plaid,
And varying notes the war-pipes
brayed

To every varying clan.
Wild through their red or sable
hair 110
Looked out their eyes with savage
stare

On Marmion as he passed;
Their legs above the knee were
bare;
Their frame was sinewy, short,
and spare,

And hardened to the blast;
Of taller race, the chiefs they own
Were by the eagle's plumage
known.

The hunted red-deer's undressed
hide

Their hairy buskins well supplied;
The graceful bonnet decked their
head; 120

Back from their shoulders hung
the plaid;

A broadsword of unwieldy length,
A dagger proved for edge and
strength,

A studded targe they wore,
And quivers, bows, and shafts, —
but, oh!

Short was the shaft and weak the
bow

To that which England bore.
The Isles-men carried at their
backs

The ancient Danish battle-axe.

They raised a wild and wondering
cry, 130
As with his guide rode Marmion by.
Loud were their clamoring tongues,
as when
The clanging sea-fowl leave the
fen,
And, with their cries discordant
mixed,
Grumbled and yelled the pipes be-
twixt.

VI

Thus through the Scottish camp
they passed,
And reached the city gate at last,
Where all around, a wakeful
guard,
Armed burghers kept their watch
and ward.
Well had they cause of jealous
fear, 140
When lay encamped in field so
near
The Borderer and the Mountain-
eer.
As through the bustling streets
they go,
All was alive with martial show ;
At every turn with dinning clang
The armorer's anvil clashed and
rang,
Or toiled the swarthy smith to
wheel
The bar that arms the charger's
heel,
Or axe or falchion to the side
Of jarring grindstone was ap-
plied. 150
Page, groom, and squire, with
hurrying pace,
Through street and lane and mar-
ket-place,
Bore lance or casque or sword ;
While burghers, with important
face,
Described each new-come lord,
Discussed his lineage, told his
name,
His following, and his warlike
fame.

The Lion led to lodging meet,
Which high o'erlooked the crowd-
ed street ;

There must the baron rest 160
Till past the hour of vesper tide,
And then to Holy-Rood must
ride, —

Such was the king's behest.
Meanwhile the Lion's care as-
signs

A banquet rich and costly wines
To Marmion and his train ;
And when the appointed hour
succeeds,
The baron dons his peaceful
weeds,
And following Lindesay as he
leads,

The palace halls they gain. 170

VII

Old Holy-Rood rung merrily
That night with wassail, mirth, and
glee :

King James within her princely
bower

Feasted the chiefs of Scotland's
power,

Summoned to spend the parting
hour ;

For he had charged that his array
Should southward march by break
of day.

Well loved that splendid monarch
aye

The banquet and the song,
By day the tourney, and by
night 180

The merry dance, traced fast and
light,

The maskers quaint, the pageant
bright,

The revel loud and long.

This feast outshone his banquets
past ;

It was his blithest — and his last.
The dazzling lamps from gallery
gay

Cast on the court a dancing ray ;
Here to the harp did minstrels
sing,

There ladies touched a softer
string;
With long-eared cap and motley
vest, 190
The licensed fool retailed his jest;
His magic tricks the juggler plied;
At dice and draughts the gallants
vied;
While some, in close recess apart,
Courtied the ladies of their heart,
Nor courted them in vain;
For often in the parting hour
Victorious Love asserts his power
O'er coldness and disdain;
And flinty is her heart can view 200
To battle march a lover true —
Can hear, perchance, his last adieu,
Nor own her share of pain.

VIII.

Through this mixed crowd of glee
and game
The king to greet Lord Marmion
came,

While, reverent, all made room.
An easy task it was, I trow,
King James's manly form to know,
Although, his courtesy to show,
He doffed to Marmion bending
low 210

His brodered cap and plume.
For royal were his garb and mien:
His cloak of crimson velvet
piled,

Trimmed with the fur of marten
wild,

His vest of changeful satin sheen,
The dazzled eye beguiled;
His gorgeous collar hung adown,
Wrought with the badge of Scot-
land's crown,

The thistle brave of old renown;
His trusty blade, Toledo right, 220
Descended from a baldric bright;
White were his buskins, on the heel
His spurs inlaid of gold and steel;
His bonnet, all of crimson fair,
Was buttoned with a ruby rare:
And Marmion deemed he ne'er
had seen

A prince of such a noble mien.

IX

The monarch's form was middle
size,

For feat of strength or exercise
Shaped in proportion fair; 230
And hazel was his eagle eye,
And auburn of the darkest dye
His short curled beard and hair.

Light was his footstep in the
dance,

And firm his stirrup in the lists;
And, oh! he had that merry
glance

That seldom lady's heart re-
sists.

Lightly from fair to fair he flew,
And loved to plead, lament, and
sue, —

Suit lightly won and short-lived
pain, 240

For monarchs seldom sigh in
vain.

I said he joyed in banquet
bower;

But, mid his mirth, 't was often
strange

How suddenly his cheer would
change,

His look o'ercast and lower,
If in a sudden turn he felt
The pressure of his iron belt,
That bound his breast in penance
pain,

In memory of his father slain.
Even so 't was strange how ever-
more, 250

Soon as the passing pang was
o'er,

Forward he rushed with double
glee

Into the stream of revelry.
Thus dim-seen object of affright
Startles the courser in his flight,
And half he halts, half springs
aside,

But feels the quickening spur ap-
plied,

And, straining on the tightened
rein,

Scours doubly swift o'er hill and
plain.

X

O'er James's heart, the courtiers
say, 260

Sir Hugh the Heron's wife held
sway;

To Scotland's court she came
To be a hostage for her lord,
Who Cessford's gallant heart had
gored,

And with the king to make accord
Had sent his lovely dame.

Nor to that lady free alone
Did the gay king allegiance own;

For the fair Queen of France
Sent him a turquoise ring and
glove, 270

And charged him, as her knight
and love,

For her to break a lance,
And strike three strokes with
Scottish brand,

And march three miles on South-
ron land,

And bid the banners of his band
In English breezes dance.

And thus for France's queen he
drest

His manly limbs in mailed vest,
And thus admitted English fair

His inmost councils still to
share, 280

And thus for both he madly
planned

The ruin of himself and land!

And yet, the sooth to tell,
Nor England's fair nor France's
queen

Were worth one pearl-drop, bright
and sheen,

From Margaret's eyes that fell, —
His own Queen Margaret, who in
Lithgow's bower

All lonely sat and wept the weary
hour.

XI

The queen sits lone in Lithgow
pile,

And weeps the weary day 290

The war against her native soil,
Her monarch's risk in battle
broil, —

And in gay Holy-Rood the while

Dame Heron rises with a smile

Upon the harp to play.

Fair was her rounded arm, as o'er

The strings her fingers flew;

And as she touched and tuned
them all,

Ever her bosom's rise and fall

Was plainer given to view; 300

For, all for heat, was laid aside

Her wimple, and her hood untied.

And first she pitched her voice to
sing,

Then glanced her dark eye on the
king,

And then around the silent ring,

And laughed, and blushed, and oft
did say

Her pretty oath, by yea and nay,

She could not, would not, durst
not play!

At length, upon the harp, with
glee,

Mingled with arch simplicity, 310

A soft yet lively air she rung,

While thus the wily lady sung: —

XII

LOCHINVAR

LADY HERON'S SONG

Oh! young Lochinvar is come out
of the west,

Through all the wide Border his
steed was the best;

And save his good broadsword he
weapons had none,

He rode all unarmed and he rode
all alone.

So faithful in love and so daunt-
less in war,

There never was knight like the
young Lochinvar.

He stayed not for brake and he
stopped not for stone,

He swam the Eske river where
ford there was none; 320

But ere he alighted at Netherby
gate

The bride had consented, the gallant came late :
For a laggard in love and a dastard in war
Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar.

So boldly he entered the Netherby Hall,
Among bridesmen, and kinsmen, and brothers, and all :
Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword, —
For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word, —
' Oh ! come ye in peace here, or come ye in war,
Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar ? ' — 330

' I long wooed your daughter, my suit you denied ;
Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide —
And now am I come, with this lost love of mine,
To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine.
There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far,
That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar.'

The bride kissed the goblet ; the knight took it up,
He quaffed off the wine, and he threw down the cup.
She looked down to blush, and she looked up to sigh,
With a smile on her lips and a tear in her eye. 340
He took her soft hand ere her mother could bar, —
' Now tread we a measure ! ' said young Lochinvar.

So stately his form, and so lovely her face,
That never a hall such a galliard did grace ;

While her mother did fret, and her father did fume,
And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and plume ;
And the bride-maidens whispered, ' 'T were better by far
To have matched our fair cousin with young Lochinvar.'

One touch to her hand and one word in her ear, 349
When they reached the hall-door, and the charger stood near ;
So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprang !
' She is won ! we are gone, over bank, bush, and scaur ;
They 'll have fleet steeds that follow,' quoth young Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Græmes of the Netherby clan ;
Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and they ran :
There was racing and chasing on Cannobie Lee,
But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.
So daring in love and so dauntless in war,
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar ? 360

XIII

The monarch o'er the siren hung,
And beat the measure as she sung ;
And, pressing closer and more near,
He whispered praises in her ear.
In loud applause the courtiers vied,
And ladies winked and spoke aside.
The witching dame to Marmion threw
A glance, where seemed to reign

The pride that claims applauses
 due, 369
 And of her royal conquest too
 A real or feigned disdain:
 Familiar was the look, and told
 Marmion and she were friends of
 old.
 The king observed their meeting
 eyes
 With something like displeased
 surprise;
 For monarchs ill can rivals brook,
 Even in a word, or smile, or look.
 Straight took he forth the parch-
 ment broad
 Which Marmion's high commis-
 sion showed:
 'Our Borders sacked by many a
 raid, 380
 Our peaceful liege-men robbed,' he
 said,
 'On day of truce our warden slain,
 Stout Barton killed, his vessels
 ta'en—
 Unworthy were we here to reign,
 Should these for vengeance cry in
 vain;
 Our full defiance, hate, and scorn,
 Our herald has to Henry borne.'

XIV

He paused, and led where Douglas
 stood
 And with stern eye the pageant
 viewed; 389
 I mean that Douglas, sixth of yore,
 Who coronet of Angus bore,
 And, when his blood and heart
 were high,
 Did the third James in camp defy,
 And all his minions led to die
 On Lauder's dreary flat.
 Princes and favorites long grew
 tame,
 And trembled at the homely name
 Of Archibald Bell-the-Cat;
 The same who left the dusky vale
 Of Hermitage in Liddisdale, 400
 Its dungeons and its towers,
 Where Bothwell's turrets brave
 the air,

And Bothwell bank is blooming
 fair,
 To fix his princely bowers.
 Though now in age he had laid
 down
 His armor for the peaceful gown,
 And for a staff his brand,
 Yet often would flash forth the fire
 That could in youth a monarch's
 ire 409
 And minion's pride withstand;
 And even that day at council
 board,
 Unapt to soothe his sovereign's
 mood,
 Against the war had Angus
 stood,
 And chafed his royal lord.

XV

His giant-form, like ruined tower,
 Though fallen its muscles' brawny
 vaunt,
 Huge-boned, and tall, and grim,
 and gaunt,
 Seemed o'er the gaudy scene to
 lower;
 His locks and beard in silver grew.
 His eyebrows kept their sable
 hue.
 Near Douglas when the monarch
 stood, 421
 His bitter speech he thus pursued:
 'Lord Marmion, since these letters
 say
 That in the North you needs must
 stay
 While slightest hopes of peace
 remain,
 Uncourteous speech it were and
 stern
 To say—Return to Lindisfarne,
 Until my herald come again.
 Then rest you in Tantallon hold;
 Your host shall be the Douglas
 bold,— 430
 A chief unlike his sires of old.
 He wears their motto on his blade,
 Their blazon o'er his towers dis-
 played,
 Yet loves his sovereign to oppose

More than to face his country's
foes.

And, I bethink me, by Saint
Stephen,

But e'en this morn to me was
given

A prize, the first fruits of the war,
Ta'en by a galley from Dunbar,

A bevy of the maids of heaven.
Under your guard these holy
maids 441

Shall safe return to cloister shades,
And, while they at Tantallon stay,
Requiem for Cochran's soul may
say.'

And with the slaughtered favorite's
name

Across the monarch's brow there
came

A cloud of ire, remorse, and shame.

XVI

In answer nought could Angus
speak,

His proud heart swelled well-nigh
to break;

He turned aside, and down his
cheek 450

A burning tear there stole.

His hand the monarch sudden took,
That sight his kind heart could
not brook:

'Now, by the Bruce's soul,
Angus, my hasty speech forgive!
For sure as doth his spirit live,
As he said of the Douglas old,

I well may say of you,—
That never king did subject hold,
In speech more free, in war more
bold, 460

More tender and more true;
Forgive me, Douglas, once
again.'—

And, while the king his hand did
strain,

The old man's tears fell down like
rain.

To seize the moment Marmion
tried,

And whispered to the king aside:
'Oh! let such tears unwonted plead

For respite short from dubious
deed!

A child will weep a bramble's
smart, 469

A maid to see her sparrow part,
A stripling for a woman's heart;
But woe awaits a country when
She sees the tears of bearded men.
Then, oh! what omen, dark and
high,

When Douglas wets his manly
eye!'

XVII

Displeased was James that stran-
ger viewed

And tampered with his changing
mood.

'Laugh those that can, weep those
that may,'

Thus did the fiery monarch say,
'Southward I march by break of
day; 480

And if within Tantallon strong
The good Lord Marmion tarries
long,

Perchance our meeting next may
fall

At Tamworth in his castle-hall.'—
The haughty Marmion felt the
taunt,

And answered grave the royal
vaunt:

'Much honored were my humble
home,

If in its halls King James should
come;

But Nottingham has archers good,
And Yorkshire men are stern of
mood, 490

Northumbrian pricklers wild and
rude.

On Derby Hills the paths are steep,
In Ouse and Tyne the fords are
deep;

And many a banner will be torn,
And many a knight to earth be
borne,

And many a sheaf of arrows spent,
Ere Scotland's king shall cross the
Trent:

Yet pause, brave prince, while yet
you may!' —

The monarch lightly turned away,
And to his nobles loud did call,
'Lords, to the dance,—a hall! a
hall!' 501

Himself his cloak and sword flung
by,

And led Dame Heron gallantly;
And minstrels, at the royal order,
Rung out 'Blue Bonnets o'er the
Border.'

XVIII

Leave we these revels now to tell
What to Saint Hilda's maids befell,
Whose galley, as they sailed again
To Whitby, by a Scot was ta'en.
Now at Dun-Edin did they bide
Till James should of their fate de-
cide, 511

And soon by his command
Were gently summoned to prepare
To journey under Marmion's care,
As escort honored, safe, and fair,
Again to English land.

The abbess told her chaplet o'er,
Nor knew which Saint she should
implore;
For, when she thought of Con-
stance, sore

She feared Lord Marmion's
mood. 520
And judge what Clara must have
felt!

The sword that hung in Marmion's
belt

Had drunk De Wilton's blood.
Unwittingly King James had
given,

As guard to Whitby's shades,
The man most dreaded under
heaven

By these defenceless maids;
Yet what petition could avail,
Or who would listen to the tale
Of woman, prisoner, and nun, 530
Mid bustle of a war begun?
They deemed it hopeless to avoid
The convoy of their dangerous
guide.

XIX

Their lodging, so the king assigned,
To Marmion's, as their guardian,
joined;

And thus it fell that, passing nigh,
The Palmer caught the abbess'
eye,

Who warned him by a scroll
She had a secret to reveal
That much concerned the Church's
weal 540

And health of sinner's soul;
And, with deep charge of secrecy,
She named a place to meet

Within an open balcony,
That hung from dizzy pitch and
high

Above the stately street,
To which, as common to each
home,

At night they might in secret come.

XX

At night in secret there they came,
The Palmer and the holy dame.
The moon among the clouds rode
high, 551

And all the city hum was by.
Upon the street, where late be-
fore

Did din of war and warriors roar,
You might have heard a pebble
fall,

A beetle hum, a cricket sing,
An owlet flap his boding wing
On Giles's steeple tall.

The antique buildings, climbing
high,

Whose Gothic frontlets sought the
sky, 560

Were here wrapt deep in shade;
There on their brows the moon-
beam broke,

Through the faint wreaths of sil-
very smoke,

And on the casements played.
And other light was none to see,
Save torches gliding far,

Before some chieftain of degree
Who left the royal revelry

To bowne him for the war. —

A solemn scene the abbess chose,
A solemn hour, her secret to dis-
close.

571

XXI

'O holy Palmer!' she began, —
'For sure he must be sainted man,
Whose blessed feet have trod the
ground

Where the Redeemer's tomb is
found, —

For his dear Church's sake, my
tale

Attend, nor deem of light avail,
Though I must speak of worldly
love, —

How vain to those who wed
above! —

De Wilton and Lord Marmion
wooed

580

Clara de Clare, of Gloster's
blood; —

Idle it were of Whitby's dame
To say of that same blood I
came; —

And once, when jealous rage was
high,

Lord Marmion said despiteously,
Wilton was traitor in his heart,
And had made league with Martin
Swart

When he came here on Simnel's
part,

And only cowardice did restrain
His rebel aid on Stokefield's
plain, —

590

And down he threw his glove.
The thing

Was tried, as wont, before the
king;

Where frankly did De Wilton own
That Swart in Guelders he had
known,

And that between them then there
went

Some scroll of courteous compli-
ment.

For this he to his castle sent;
But when his messenger returned,
Judge how De Wilton's fury
burned!

For in his packet there were laid
Letters that claimed disloyal aid
And proved King Henry's cause
betrayed.

602

His fame, thus blighted, in the
field

He strove to clear by spear and
shield; —

To clear his fame in vain he strove,
For wondrous are His ways above!
Perchance some form was unob-
served,

Perchance in prayer or faith he
swerved,

Else how could guiltless champion
quail,

Or how the blessed ordeal fail?

XXII

'His squire, who now De Wilton
saw

611

As recreant doomed to suffer law,
Repentant, owned in vain
That while he had the scrolls in
care

A stranger maiden, passing fair,
Had drenched him with a bever-
age rare;

His words no faith could gain.
With Clare alone he credence won.
Who, rather than wed Marmion,
Did to Saint Hilda's shrine re-
pair,

620

To give our house her livings fair,
And die a vestal votaress there.
The impulse from the earth was
given,

But bent her to the paths of hea-
ven.

A purer heart, a lovelier maid,
Ne'er sheltered her in Whitby's
shade,

No, not since Saxon Edelfled;
Only one trace of earthly stain,
That for her lover's loss

She cherishes a sorrow vain, 630
And murmurs at the cross. —

And then her heritage: — it goes
Along the banks of Tame;
Deep fields of grain the reaper
mows,

In meadows rich the heifer lows,
 The falconer and huntsman knows
 Its woodlands for the game.
 Shame were it to Saint Hilda dear,
 And I, her humble votaress here,
 Should do a deadly sin, 640
 Her temple spoiled before mine
 eyes,
 If this false Marmion such a prize
 By my consent should win;
 Yet hath our boisterous monarch
 sworn
 That Clare shall from our house
 be torn,
 And grievous cause have I to
 fear
 Such mandate doth Lord Marmion
 bear.

XXIII

'Now, prisoner, helpless, and be-
 trayed
 To evil power, I claim thine aid,
 By every step that thou hast
 trod 650
 To holy shrine and grotto dim,
 By every martyr's tortured limb,
 By angel, saint, and seraphim,
 And by the Church of God!
 For mark: when Wilton was be-
 trayed,
 And with his squire forged letters
 laid,
 She was, alas! that sinful maid
 By whom the deed was done, —
 Oh! shame and horror to be said!
 She was — a perjured nun! 660
 No clerk in all the land like her
 Traced quaint and varying char-
 acter.
 Perchance you may a marvel
 deem,
 That Marmion's paramour —
 For such vile thing she was —
 should scheme
 Her lover's nuptial hour;
 But o'er him thus she hoped to
 gain,
 As privy to his honor's stain,
 Illimitable power.
 For this she secretly retained 670

Each proof that might the plot
 reveal,
 Instructions with his hand and
 seal;
 And thus Saint Hilda deigned,
 Through sinners' perfidy im-
 pure,
 Her house's glory to secure
 And Clare's immortal weal.

XXIV

'T were long and needless here
 to tell
 How to my hand these papers fell;
 With me they must not stay.
 Saint Hilda keep her abbess true!
 Who knows what outrage he might
 do 680
 While journeying by the way? —
 O blessed Saint, if e'er again
 I venturous leave thy calm do-
 main,
 To travel or by land or main,
 Deep penance may I pay! —
 Now, saintly Palmer, mark my
 prayer:
 I give this packet to thy care,
 For thee to stop they will not
 dare;
 And oh! with cautious speed
 To Wolsey's hand the papers
 bring, 690
 That he may show them to the
 king:
 And for thy well-earned meed,
 Thou holy man, at Whitby's
 shrine
 A weekly mass shall still be thine
 While priests can sing and
 read. —
 What all'st thou? — Speak! — For
 as he took
 The charge a strong emotion
 shook
 His frame, and ere reply
 They heard a faint yet shrilly
 tone, 700
 Like distant clarion feebly blown,
 That on the breeze did die;
 And loud the abbess shrieked in
 fear,

'Saint Withold, save us! — What
is here!

Look at yon City Cross!
See on its battled tower appear
Phantoms, that scutcheons seem
to rear
And blazoned banners toss!' —

XXV

Dun-Edin's Cross, a pillared stone,
Rose on a turret octagon; — 710
But now is razed that monument,
Whence royal edict rang,
And voice of Scotland's law was
sent

In glorious trumpet-clang.
Oh! be his tomb as lead to lead
Upon its dull destroyer's head! —
A minstrel's malison is said. —
Then on its battlements they saw
A vision, passing Nature's law,
Strange, wild, and dimly seen;
Figures that seemed to rise and
die, 721

Gibber and sign, advance and fly,
While nought confirmed could ear
or eye

Discern of sound or mien.
Yet darkly did it seem as there
Heralds and pursuivants prepare,
With trumpet sound and blazon
fair,

A summons to proclaim;
But indistinct the pageant proud,
As fancy forms of midnight cloud
When flings the moon upon her
shroud 731

A wavering tinge of flame;
It flits, expands, and shifts, till
loud,
From midmost of the spectre
crowd,

This awful summons came: —

XXVI.

'Prince, prelate, potentate, and
peer,

Whose names I now shall call,
Scottish or foreigner, give ear!
Subjects of him who sent me
here,

At his tribunal to appear 740
I summon one and all:

I cite you by each deadly sin
That e'er hath soiled your hearts
within;

I cite you by each brutal lust
That e'er defiled your earthly
dust, —

By wrath, by pride, by fear,
By each o'ermastering passion's
tone,

By the dark grave and dying
groan!

When forty days are passed and
gone,

I cite you, at your monarch's
throne 750

To answer and appear.' —

Then thundered forth a roll of
names: —

The first was thine, unhappy
James!

Then all thy nobles came;
Crawford, Glencairn, Montrose,
Argyle,

Ross, Bothwell, Forbes, Lennox,
Lyle, —

Why should I tell their separate
style?

Each chief of birth and fame,
Of Lowland, Highland, Border,
Isle,

Foredoomed to Flodden's carnage
pile, 760

Was cited there by name;
And Marmion, Lord of Fontenaye,
Of Lutterward, and Scriverbaye;
De Wilton, erst of Aberley,
The self-same thundering voice
did say. —

But then another spoke:

'Thy fatal summons I deny
And thine infernal lord defy,
Appealing me to Him on high

Who burst the sinner's yoke.' 770
At that dread accent, with a
scream,

Parted the pageant like a dream,
The summoner was gone.
Prone on her face the abbess
fell,

And fast, and fast, her beads did
tell;

Her nuns came, startled by the
yell,

And found her there alone.

She marked not, at the scene
aghast,

What time or how the Palmer
passed.

XXVII

Shift we the scene.—The camp
doth move; 780

Dun-Edin's streets are empty
now,

Save when, for weal of those they
love

To pray the prayer and vow the
vow,

The tottering child, the anxious
fair,

The gray-haired sire, with pious
care,

To chapels and to shrines repair.—
Where is the Palmer now? and

where
The abbess, Marmion, and
Clare?—

Bold Douglas! to Tantallon fair
They journey in thy charge: 790

Lord Marmion rode on his right
hand,

The Palmer still was with the
band;

Angus, like Lindesay, did com-
mand

That none should roam at large.
But in that Palmer's altered mien

A wondrous change might now be
seen;

Freely he spoke of war,
Of marvels wrought by single hand

When lifted for a native land,
And still looked high, as if he

planned 800

Some desperate deed afar.

His courser would he feed and
stroke,

And, tucking up his sable frock,
Would first his mettle bold pro-

voke,

Then soothe or quell his pride.

Old Hubert said that never one

He saw, except Lord Marmion,

A steed so fairly ride.

XXVIII

Some half-hour's march behind
there came,

By Eustace governed fair, 810

A troop escorting Hilda's dame,

With all her nuns and Clare.

No audience had Lord Marmion
sought;

Ever he feared to aggravate

Clara de Clare's suspicious hate;

And safer 't was, he thought,

To wait till, from the nuns re-
moved,

The influence of kinsmen loved,

And suit by Henry's self ap-
proved,

Her slow consent had wrought. 820

His was no flickering flame, that
dies,

Unless when fanned by looks
and sighs

And lighted oft at lady's eyes;

He longed to stretch his wide
command

O'er luckless Clara's ample land:

Besides, when Wilton with him
vied,

Although the pang of humbled
pride

The place of jealousy supplied,
Yet conquest, by that meanness

won

He almost loathed to think upon,
Led him, at times, to hate the

cause 831

Which made him burst through
honor's laws.

If e'er he loved, 't was her alone

Who died within that vault of
stone.

XXIX

And now, when close at hand they
saw

North Berwick's town and lofty
Law,

Fitz-Eustace bade them pause
awhile

Before a venerable pile

Whose turrets viewed afar 839

The lofty Bass, the Lambie Isle,

The ocean's peace or war.

At tolling of a bell, forth came

The convent's venerable dame,

And prayed Saint Hilda's abbess
rest

With her, a loved and honored
guest,

Till Douglas should a bark pre-
pare

To waft her back to Whitby fair.

Glad was the abbess, you may
guess,

And thanked the Scottish prioress;

And tedious were to tell, I ween,

The courteous speech that passed
between. 851

O'erjoyed the nuns their palfreys
leave;

But when fair Clara did intend,

Like them, from horseback to de-
scend,

Fitz-Eustace said: 'I grieve,
Fair lady, grieve e'en from my
heart,

Such gentle company to part;—

Think not discourtesy,

But lords' commands must be
obeyed,

And Marmion and the Douglas
said 860

That you must wend with me.

Lord Marmion hath a letter broad,
Which to the Scottish earl he
showed,

Commanding that beneath his care

Without delay you shall repair

To your good kinsman, Lord Fitz-
Clare.'

xxx

The startled abbess loud ex-
claimed;

But she at whom the blow was
aimed

Grew pale as death and cold as
lead,—

She deemed she heard her death-
doom read. 870

'Cheer thee, my child!' the abbess
said,

'They dare not tear thee from my
hand,

To ride alone with armed band.'—

'Nay, holy mother, nay,'

Fitz-Eustace said, 'the lovely
Clare

Will be in Lady Angus' care,

In Scotland while we stay;

And when we move an easy ride

Will bring us to the English
side,

Female attendance to provide 880

Befitting Gloster's heir;

Nor thinks nor dreams my noble
lord,

By slightest look, or act, or word,

To harass Lady Clare.

Her faithful guardian he will be,

Nor sue for slightest courtesy

That e'en to stranger falls,

Till he shall place her safe and
free

Within her kinsman's halls.'

He spoke, and blushed with ear-
nest grace; 890

His faith was painted on his
face,

And Clare's worst fear relieved.

The Lady Abbess loud exclaimed

On Henry, and the Douglas
blamed,

Entreated, threatened, grieved,

To martyr, saint, and prophet
prayed,

Against Lord Marmion inveighed,

And called the prioress to aid,

To curse with candle, bell, and
book.

Her head the grave Cistercian
shook: 900

'The Douglas and the king,' she
said,

'In their commands will be
obeyed;

Grieve not, nor dream that harm
can fall

The maiden in Tantallon Hall.'

XXXI

The abbess, seeing strife was
vain,
Assumed her wonted state
again, —

For much of state she had, —
Composed her veil, and raised her
head,

And 'Bid,' in solemn voice she
said,

'Thy master, bold and bad, 910
The records of his house turn
o'er,

And, when he shall there written
see

That one of his own ancestry
Drove the monks forth of Coven-
try,

Bid him his fate explore !

Prancing in pride of earthly
trust,

His charger hurled him to the
dust,

And, by a base plebeian thrust,
He died his band before.

God judge 'twixt Marmion and
me ; 920

He is a chief of high degree,
And I a poor recluse,

Yet oft in holy writ we see

Even such weak minister as me
May the oppressor bruise ;

For thus, inspired, did Judith
slay

The mighty in his sin,

And Jael thus, and Deborah' —

Here hasty Blount broke in :

'Fitz-Eustace, we must march our
band ; 930

Saint Anton' fire thee ! wilt thou
stand

All day, with bonnet in thy hand,
To hear the lady preach ?

By this good light ! if thus we
stay,

Lord Marmion for our fond delay
Will sharper sermon teach.

Come, don thy cap and mount thy
horse ;

The dame must patience take per-
force.'

XXXII

'Submit we then to force,' said
Clare,

'But let this barbarous lord de-
spair 940

His purposed aim to win ;
Let him take living, land, and
life,

But to be Marmion's wedded wife

In me were deadly sin :

And if it be the king's decree

That I must find no sanctuary

In that inviolable dome

Where even a homicide might
come

And safely rest his head,
Though at its open portals stood
Thirsting to pour forth blood for
blood, 951

The kinsmen of the dead,

Yet one asylum is my own

Against the dreaded hour, —

A low, a silent, and a lone,

Where kings have little power,

One victim is before me there. —

Mother, your blessing, and in
prayer

Remember your unhappy Clare !'

Loud weeps the abbess, and be-
stows 960

Kind blessings many a one ;

Weeping and wailing loud arose,

Round patient Clare, the clamor-
ous woes

Of every simple nun.

His eyes the gentle Eustace dried,

And scarce rude Blount the sight
could bide.

Then took the squire her rein,

And gently led away her steed,

And by each courteous word and
deed

To cheer her strove in vain. 970

XXXIII

But scant three miles the band
had rode,

When o'er a height they passed,
And, sudden, close before them

showed

His towers Tantallon vast,

Broad, massive, high, and stretch-
 ing far,
 And held impregnable in war.
 On a projecting rock they rose,
 And round three sides the ocean
 flows,
 The fourth did battled walls en-
 close 979
 And double mound and fosse.
 By narrow drawbridge, outworks
 strong,
 Through studded gates, an en-
 trance long,
 To the main court they cross.
 It was a wide and stately square;
 Around were lodgings fit and fair,
 And towers of various form,
 Which on the court projected far
 And broke its lines quadrangular.
 Here was square keep, there tur-
 ret high, 989
 Or pinnacle that sought the sky,
 Whence oft the warder could de-
 sery
 The gathering ocean-storm.

XXXIV

Here did they rest. — The princely
 care
 Of Douglas why should I declare,
 Or say they met reception fair?
 Or why the tidings say,
 Which varying to Tantallon came,
 By hurrying posts or fleeter fame,
 With every varying day?
 And, first, they heard King James
 had won 1000
 Etall, and Wark, and Ford; and
 then,
 That Norham Castle strong was
 ta'en.
 At that sore marvelled Marmion,
 And Douglas hoped his monarch's
 hand
 Would soon subdue Northumber-
 land;
 But whispered news there came,
 That while his host inactive lay,
 And melted by degrees away,
 King James was dallying off the
 day

With Heron's wily dame. 1010
 Such acts to chronicles I yield;
 Go seek them there and see:
 Mine is a tale of Flodden Field,
 And not a history. —
 At length they heard the Scottish
 host
 On that high ridge had made their
 post
 Which frowns o'er Millfield
 Plain;
 And that brave Surrey many a
 band
 Had gathered in the Southern
 land,
 And marched into Northumber-
 land, 1020
 And camp at Wooler ta'en.
 Marmion, like charger in the stall,
 That hears, without, the trumpet-
 call,
 Began to chafe and swear: —
 'A sorry thing to hide my head
 In castle, like a fearful maid,
 When such a field is near.
 Needs must I see this battle-day;
 Death to my fame if such a fray
 Were fought, and Marmion away!
 The Douglas, too, I wot not
 why, 1031
 Hath bated of his courtesy;
 No longer in his halls I'll stay:'
 Then bade his band they should
 array
 For march against the dawning
 day.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO
SIXTH

TO RICHARD HEBER, ESQ.

Mertoun House, Christmas
 HEAP on more wood! — the wind
 is chill;
 But let it whistle as it will,
 We'll keep our Christmas merry
 still.
 Each age has deemed the new-
 born year

The fittest time for festal cheer :
Even, heathen yet, the savage
Dane

At Iol more deep the mead did
drain,

High on the beach his galleys
drew,

And feasted all his pirate crew ;
Then in his low and pine-built
hall, 10

Where shields and axes decked
the wall,

They gorged upon the half-dressed
steer,

Caroused in seas of sable beer,
While round in brutal jest were
thrown

The half-gnawed rib and marrow-
bone,

Or listened all in grim delight
While scalds yelled out the joys of
fight.

Then forth in frenzy would they
hie,

While wildly loose their red locks
fly,

And dancing round the blazing
pile, 20

They make such barbarous mirth
the while

As best might to the mind recall
The boisterous joys of Odin's hall.

And well our Christian sires of
old

Loved when the year its course
had rolled,

And brought blithe Christmas
back again

With all his hospitable train.

Domestic and religious rite

Gave honor to the holy night ;

On Christmas eve the bells were
rung, 30

On Christmas eve the mass was
sung :

That only night in all the year

Saw the stoled priest the chalice
rear.

The damsel donned her kirtle
sheen ;

The hall was dressed with holly
green ;

Forth to the wood did merry-men
go,

To gather in the mistletoe.

Then opened wide the baron's
hall

To vassal, tenant, serf, and all ;

Power laid his rod of rule aside, 40
And Ceremony doffed his pride.

The heir, with roses in his shoes,
That night might village partner
choose ;

The lord, underogating, share

The vulgar game of 'post and
pair.'

All hailed, with uncontrolled de-
light

And general voice, the happy night
That to the cottage, as the crown,
Brought tidings of salvation down.

The fire, with well-dried logs
supplied, 50

Went roaring up the chimney
wide ;

The huge hall-table's oaken face,
Scrubbed till it shone, the day to
grace,

Bore then upon its massive board
No mark to part the squire and
lord.

Then was brought in the lusty
brawn

By old blue-coated serving-man ;

Then the grim boar's-head frowned
on high,

Crested with bays and rosemary.

Well can the green-garbed ranger
tell 60

How, when, and where, the mon-
ster fell,

What dogs before his death he
tore,

And all the baiting of the boar.

The wassail round, in good brown
bowls

Garnished with ribbons, blithely
trowls.

There the huge sirloin reeked ;
hard by

Plum-porridge stood and Christ-
mas pie ;

Nor failed old Scotland to pro-
duce

At such high tide her savory
goose. 69

Then came the merry maskers in,
And carols roared with blithesome
din ;

If unmelodious was the song,

It was a hearty note and strong.

Who lists may in their mumming
see

Traces of ancient mystery ;

White shirts supplied the masquer-
ade,

And smutted cheeks the visors
made ;

But oh ! what maskers, richly
dight,

Can boast of bosoms half so light !

England was merry England when
Old Christmas brought his sports
again. 81

'Twas Christmas broached the
mightiest ale,

'Twas Christmas told the merriest
tale ;

A Christmas gambol oft could
cheer

The poor man's heart through half
the year.

Still linger in our northern clime
Some remnants of the good old
time,

And still within our valleys here

We hold the kindred title dear,

Even when, perchance, its far-
fetched claim 90

To Southron ear sounds empty
name ;

For course of blood, our proverbs
deem,

Is warmer than the mountain-
stream.

And thus my Christmas still I hold
Where my great-grandsire came
of old,

With amber beard and flaxen hair
And reverend apostolic air,

The feast and holy-tide to share,
And mix sobriety with wine,
And honest mirth with thoughts
divine : 100

Small thought was his, in after
time

E'er to be hitched into a rhyme.

The simple sire could only boast

That he was loyal to his cost,

The banished race of kings re-
vered,

And lost his land, — but kept his
beard.

In these dear halls, where wel-
come kind

Is with fair liberty combined,
Where cordial friendship gives the
hand,

And flies constraint the magic
wand 110

Of the fair dame that rules the
land,

Little we heed the tempest drear,
While music, mirth, and social
cheer

Speed on their wings the passing
year.

And Mertoun's halls are fair e'en
now,

When not a leaf is on the bough.

Tweed loves them well, and turns
again,

As loath to leave the sweet do-
main,

And holds his mirror to her face,

And clips her with a close em-
brace : — 120

Gladly as he we seek the dome,
And as reluctant turn us home.

How just that at this time of
glee

My thoughts should, Heber, turn
to thee !

For many a merry hour we've
known,

And heard the chimes of mid-
night's tone,

Cease, then, my friend ! a moment
cease,

And leave these classic tomes in
peace!

Of Roman and of Grecian lore
Sure mortal brain can hold no
more. 130

'These ancients, as Noll Bluff
might say,

'Were pretty fellows in their day,'
But time and tide o'er all pre-
vail —

On Christmas eve a Christmas
tale —

Of wonder and of war — 'Profane!
What! leave the lofty Latian
strain,

Her stately prose, her verse's
charms,

To hear the clash of rusty arms;
In Fairy-land or Limbo lost,
To jostle conjurer and ghost, 140
Goblin and witch!' — Nay, Heber
dear,

Before you touch my charter, hear;
Though Leyden aids, alas! no
more,

My cause with many - language
lore,

This may I say: — in realms of
death

Ulysses meets Alcides' *wraith*,
Æneas upon Thracia's shore
The ghost of murdered Polydore;
For omens, we in Livy cross
At every turn *locutus Bos*. 150

As grave and duly speaks that ox
As if he told the price of stocks,
Or held in Rome republican
The place of Common-councilman.

All nations have their omens
drear,

Their legends wild of woe and
fear.

To Cambria look — the peasant see
Bethink him of Glendowerdy
And shun 'the Spirit's Blasted
Tree.' —

The Highlander, whose red clay-
more 160

The battle turned on Maida's
shore,

Will on a Friday morn look pale,
If asked to tell a fairy tale:

He fears the vengeful Elfin King,
Who leaves that day his grassy
ring;

Invisible to human ken,
He walks among the sons of men.

Didst e'er, dear Heber, pass
along

Beneath the towers of Franché-
mont, 169

Which, like an eagle's nest in air,
Hang o'er the stream and hamlet
fair?

Deep in their vaults, the peasants
say,

A mighty treasure buried lay,
Amassed through rapine and
through wrong

By the last Lord of Franchémont.
The iron chest is bolted hard,
A huntsman sits its constant
guard;

Around his neck his horn is hung,
His hanger in his belt is slung;
Before his feet his bloodhounds
lie: 180

An 't were not for his gloomy eye,
Whose withering glance no heart
can brook,

As true a huntsman doth he look
As bugle e'er in brake did sound,
Or ever hallooed to a hound.

To chase the fiend and win the
prize

In that same dungeon ever tries
An aged necromantic priest;
It is an hundred years at least
Since 'twixt them first the strife
begun, 190

And neither yet has lost nor won.
And oft the conjurer's words will
make

The stubborn demon groan and
quake;

And oft the bands of iron break,
Or bursts one lock that still amain
Fast as 't is opened, shuts again.
That magic strife within the tomb
May last until the day of doom.

Unless the adept shall learn to
tell
The very word that clenched the
spell 200
When Franch'mont locked the
treasure cell.
An hundred years are passed and
gone,
And scarce three letters has he
won.

Such general superstition may
Excuse for old Pitscottie say,
Whose gossip history has given
My song the messenger from
heaven

That warned, in Lithgow, Scot-
land's king,
Nor less the infernal summoning;
May pass the Monk of Durham's
tale, 210
Whose demon fought in Gothic
mail;

May pardon plead for Fordun
grave,

Who told of Gifford's Goblin-Cave.
But why such instances to you,
Who in an instant can renew
Your treasured hoards of various
lore,

And furnish twenty thousand
more?

Hoard, not like theirs whose vol-
umes rest

Like treasures in the Franch'mont
chest, 219

While gripple owners still refuse
To others what they cannot use;
Give them the priest's whole cen-
tury,

They shall not spell you letters
three,—

Their pleasure in the books the
same

The magpie takes in pilfered
gem.

Thy volumes, open as thy heart,
Delight, amusement, science, art,
To every ear and eye impart;
Yet who, of all who thus employ
them,

Can like the owner's self enjoy
them?— 230

But, hark! I hear the distant
drum!

The day of Flodden Field is
come,—

Adieu, dear Heber! life and
health,

And store of literary wealth.

CANTO SIXTH

THE BATTLE

I

WHILE great events were on the
gale,

And each hour brought a varying
tale,

And the demeanor, changed and
cold,

Of Douglas fretted Marmion bold,
And, like the impatient steed of
war,

He snuffed the battle from afar,
And hopes were none that back
again

Herald should come from Terou-
enne,

Where England's king in leaguer
lay,

Before decisive battle-day,— 10
While these things were, the
mournful Clare

Did in the dame's devotions share:
For the good countess ceaseless
prayed

To Heaven and saints her sons to
aid,

And with short interval did pass
From prayer to book, from book
to mass,

And all in high baronial pride,—
A life both dull and dignified:
Yet, as Lord Marmion nothing
pressed

Upon her intervals of rest, 20
Dejected Clara well could bear
The formal state, the lengthened
prayer,

Though dearest to her wounded
heart
The hours that she might spend
apart.

II

I said Tantallon's dizzy steep
Hung o'er the margin of the deep.
Many a rude tower and rampart
there

Repelled the insult of the air,
Which, when the tempest vexed
the sky,

Half breeze, half spray, came
whistling by. 30

Above the rest a turret square
Did o'er its Gothic entrance bear,
Of sculpture rude, a stony shield;
The Bloody Heart was in the field,
And in the chief three mullets
stood,

The cognizance of Douglas blood.
The turret held a narrow stair,
Which, mounted, gave you access
where

A parapet's embattled row 39
Did seaward round the castle go.
Sometimes in dizzy steps descend-
ing,

Sometimes in narrow circuit bend-
ing,

Sometimes in platform broad ex-
tending,

Its varying circle did combine
Bulwark, and bartizan, and line,
And bastion, tower, and vantage-
coign.

Above the booming ocean leant
The far-projecting battlement;
The billows burst in ceaseless
flow

Upon the precipice below. 50
Where'er Tantallon faced the land,
Gate-works and walls were strong-
ly manned;

No need upon the sea-girt side:
The steepy rock and frantic tide
Approach of human step denied,
And thus these lines and ramparts
rude

Were left in deepest solitude.

III

And, for they were so lonely, Clare
Would to these battlements re-
pair, 59

And muse upon her sorrows there,
And list the sea-bird's cry,
Or slow, like noontide ghost, would
glide

Along the dark-gray bulwarks'
side,

And ever on the heaving tide
Look down with weary eye.
Oft did the cliff and swelling
main

Recall the thoughts of Whitby's
fane, —

A home she ne'er might see again:
For she had laid adown,
So Douglas bade, the hood and
veil, 70

And frontlet of the cloister pale,
And Benedictine gown:

It were unseemly sight, he said,
A novice out of convent shade. —
Now her bright locks with sunny
glow

Again adorned her brow of snow;
Her mantle rich, whose borders
round

A deep and fretted broidery
bound,

In golden foldings sought the
ground;

Of holy ornament, alone 80
Remained a cross with ruby stone;
And often did she look

On that which in her hand she
bore,

With velvet bound and broidered
o'er,

Her breviary book.

In such a place, so lone, so grim,
At dawning pale or twilight dim,
It fearful would have been
To meet a form so richly dressed,
With book in hand, and cross on
breast, 90

And such a woful mien.
Fitz-Eustace, loitering with his
bow,

To practise on the gull and crow,

Saw her at distance gliding slow,
 And did by Mary swear
 Some lovelorn fay she might have
 been,
 Or in romance some spell-bound
 queen,
 For ne'er in work-day world was
 seen
 A form so witching fair. 99

IV

Once walking thus at evening tide
 It chanced a gliding sail she spied,
 And sighing thought—'The abbess
 there
 Perchance does to her home re-
 pair;
 Her peaceful rule, where Duty
 free
 Walks hand in hand with Charity,
 Where oft Devotion's tranced glow
 Can such a glimpse of heaven be-
 stow
 That the enraptured sisters see
 High vision and deep mystery,—
 The very form of Hilda fair, 110
 Hovering upon the sunny air
 And smiling on her votaries'
 prayer.
 Oh! wherefore to my duller eye
 Did still the Saint her form deny?
 Was it that, seared by sinful scorn,
 My heart could neither melt nor
 burn?
 Or lie my warm affections low
 With him that taught them first to
 glow?
 Yet, gentle abbess, well I knew
 To pay thy kindness grateful due,
 And well could brook the mild
 command 121
 That ruled thy simple maiden
 band.
 How different now, condemned to
 bide
 My doom from this dark tyrant's
 pride!—
 But Marmion has to learn ere long
 That constant mind and hate of
 wrong
 Descended to a feeble girl

From Red de Clare, stout Gloster's
 Earl:
 Of such a stem a sapling weak,
 He ne'er shall bend, although he
 break. 130

V

'But see!—what makes this armor
 here?'—
 For in her path there lay
 Targe, corselet, helm; she viewed
 them near.—
 'The breastplate pierced!—Ay,
 much I fear,
 Weak fence wert thou 'gainst foe-
 man's spear,
 That hath made fatal entrance
 here,
 As these dark blood-gouts say.—
 Thus Wilton!—Oh! not corselet's
 ward,
 Not truth, as diamond pure and
 hard, 139
 Could be thy manly bosom's guard
 On yon disastrous day!'—
 She raised her eyes in mournful
 mood,—
 Wilton himself before her stood!
 It might have seemed his passing
 ghost,
 For every youthful grace was lost,
 And joy unwonted and surprise
 Gave their strange wildness to his
 eyes.—
 Expect not, noble dames and lords,
 That I can tell such scene in
 words:
 What skilful limner e'er would
 choose 150
 To paint the rainbow's varying
 hues,
 Unless to mortal it were given
 To dip his brush in dyes of heaven?
 Far less can my weak line declare
 Each changing passion's shade:
 Brightening to rapture from de-
 spair,
 Sorrow, surprise, and pity there,
 And joy with her angelic air,
 And hope that paints the future
 fair, 159

Their varying hues displayed;
 Each o'er its rival's ground extend-
 ing,
 Alternate conquering, shifting,
 blending,
 Till all fatigued the conflict yield,
 And mighty love retains the field.
 Shortly I tell what then he said,
 By many a tender word delayed,
 And modest blush, and bursting
 sigh,
 And question kind, and fond
 reply:—

VI

DE WILTON'S HISTORY

'Forget we that disastrous day
 When senseless in the lists I lay.
 Thence dragged,—but how I
 cannot know, 171
 For sense and recollection
 fled,—
 I found me on a pallet low
 Within my ancient beadsman's
 shed.
 Austin,—remember'st thou, my
 Clare,
 How thou didst blush when the old
 man,
 When first our infant love began,
 Said we would make a matchless
 pair?—
 Menials and friends and kinsmen
 fled 179
 From the degraded traitor's bed,—
 He only held my burning head,
 And tended me for many a day
 While wounds and fever held their
 sway.
 But far more needful was his care
 When sense returned to wake de-
 spair;
 For I did tear the closing wound,
 And dash me frantic on the
 ground,
 If e'er I heard the name of Clare.
 At length, to calmer reason
 brought,
 Much by his kind attendance
 wrought, 190

With him I left my native
 strand,
 And, in a palmer's weeds arrayed,
 My hated name and form to shade,
 I journeyed many a land,
 No more a lord of rank and birth,
 But mingled with the dregs of
 earth.

Oft Austin for my reason feared,
 When I would sit, and deeply
 brood
 On dark revenge and deeds of
 blood,

Or wild mad schemes upreared.
 My friend at length fell sick, and
 said 201

God would remove him soon;
 And while upon his dying bed
 He begged of me a boon—
 If e'er my deadliest enemy
 Beneath my brand should con-
 quered lie,
 Even then my mercy should awake
 And spare his life for Austin's
 sake.

VII

'Still restless as a second Cain,
 To Scotland next my route was
 ta'en, 210

Full well the paths I knew.
 Fame of my fate made various
 sound,
 That death in pilgrimage I found,
 That I had perished of my
 wound,—

None cared which tale was true;
 And living eye could never guess
 De Wilton in his palmer's dress,
 For now that sable slough is shed,
 And trimmed my shaggy beard and
 head,

I scarcely know me in the glass.
 A chance most wondrous did pro-
 vide 221
 That I should be that baron's
 guide—

I will not name his name!—
 Vengeance to God alone belongs;
 But, when I think on all my
 wrongs,

My blood is liquid flame!
 And ne'er the time shall I forget
 When, in a Scottish hostel set,
 Dark looks we did exchange:
 What were his thoughts I cannot
 tell, 230
 But in my bosom mustered Hell
 Its plans of dark revenge.

VIII

'A word of vulgar augury
 That broke from me, I scarce knew
 why,
 Brought on a village tale,
 Which wrought upon his moody
 sprite,
 And sent him armed forth by
 night.
 I borrowed steed and mail
 And weapons from his sleeping
 band;
 And, passing from a postern
 door, 240
 We met and 'countered, hand to
 hand,—
 He fell on Gifford-moor.
 For the death-stroke my brand I
 drew,—
 Oh! then my helmed head he
 knew,
 The palmer's cowl was gone,—
 Then had three inches of my blade
 The heavy debt of vengeance
 paid,—
 My hand the thought of Austin
 stayed;
 I left him there alone.—
 O good old man! even from the
 grave 250
 Thy spirit could thy master save:
 If I had slain my foeman, ne'er
 Had Whitby's abbess in her fear
 Given to my hand this packet dear,
 Of power to clear my injured fame
 And vindicate De Wilton's
 name.—
 Perchance you heard the abbess
 tell
 Of the strange pageantry of hell
 That broke our secret speech—
 It rose from the infernal shade, 260

Or featly was some juggle played,
 A tale of peace to teach.
 Appeal to Heaven I judged was
 best
 When my name came among the
 rest.

IX

'Now here within Tantallon hold
 To Douglas late my tale I told,
 To whom my house was known of
 old.
 Won by my proofs, his falchion
 bright
 This eve anew shall dub me knight.
 These were the arms that once did
 turn 270
 The tide of fight on Otterburne,
 And Harry Hotspur forced to yield
 When the Dead Douglas won the
 field.
 These Angus gave—his armorer's
 care
 Ere morn shall every breach re-
 pair;
 For nought, he said, was in his
 halls
 But ancient armor on the walls,
 And aged chargers in the stalls,
 And women, priests, and gray-
 haired men;
 The rest were all in Twisel glen. 280
 And now I watch my armor here,
 By law of arms, till midnight's
 near;
 Then, once again a belted knight,
 Seek Surrey's camp with dawn of
 light.

X

'There soon again we meet, my
 Clare!
 This baron means to guide thee
 there:
 Douglas reveres his king's com-
 mand,
 Else would he take thee from his
 band. 288
 And there thy kinsman Surrey, too,
 Will give De Wilton justice due.
 Now meeter far for martial broil,

Firmer my limbs and strung by
toil,
Once more' — 'O Wilton! must we
then

Risk new-found happiness again,
Trust fate of arms once more?
And is there not an humble glen
Where we, content and poor,
Might build a cottage in the shade,
A shepherd thou, and I to aid

Thy task on dale and moor? —
That reddening brow! — too well I
know 301

Not even thy Clare can peace be-
stow

While falsehood stains thy
name:

Go then to fight! Clare bids thee
go!

Clare can a warrior's feelings know
And weep a warrior's shame,

Can Red Earl Gilbert's spirit feel,
Buckle the spurs upon thy heel

And belt thee with thy brand of
steel,

And send thee forth to fame!' 310

XI

That night upon the rocks and bay
The midnight moonbeam slumber-
ing lay,

And poured its silver light and
pure

Through loophole and through
embrasure

Upon Tantallon tower and hall;
But chief where arched windows
wide

Illuminate the chapel's pride

The sober glances fall.

Much was there need; though
seamed with scars,

Two veterans of the Douglas'
wars, 320

Though two gray priests were
there,

And each a blazing torch held
high,

You could not by their blaze de-
sery

The chapel's carving fair.

Amid that dim and smoky light,
Checkering the silvery moonshine
bright,

A bishop by the altar stood,
A noble lord of Douglas blood,
With mitre sheen and rochet
white.

Yet showed his meek and thought-
ful eye 330

But little pride of prelacy;
More pleased that in a barbarous
age

He gave rude Scotland Virgil's
page

Than that beneath his rule he
held

The bishopric of fair Dunkeld.

Beside him ancient Angus stood,
Doffed his furred gown and sable
hood;

O'er his huge form and visage pale
He wore a cap and shirt of mail,

And leaned his large and wrinkled
hand 340

Upon the huge and sweeping
brand

Which wont of yore in battle fray
His foeman's limbs to shred away,
As wood-knife lops the sapling
spray.

He seemed as, from the tombs
around

Rising at judgment-day,
Some giant Douglas may be
found

In all his old array; 348

So pale his face, so huge his limb,
So old his arms, his look so grim.

XII

Then at the altar Wilton kneels,
And Clare the spurs bound on his
heels;

And think what next he must have
felt

At buckling of the falchion belt!
And judge how Clara changed
her hue

While fastening to her lover's side
A friend, which, though in danger
tried,

He once had found untrue !
Then Douglas struck him with his
blade :

' Saint Michael and Saint Andrew
aid, 360

I dub thee knight.
Arise, Sir Ralph, De Wilton's heir !
For king, for church, for lady fair,
See that thou fight.'

And Bishop Gawain, as he rose,
Said : ' Wilton ! grieve not for thy
woes,

Disgrace, and trouble ;
For He who honor best bestows
May give thee double.'

De Wilton sobbed, for sob he
must : 370

' Where'er I meet a Douglas, trust
That Douglas is my brother !'

' Nay, nay,' old Angus said, ' not
so ;

To Surrey's camp thou now must
go,

Thy wrongs no longer smother.
I have two sons in yonder field ;
And, if thou meet'st them under
shield,
Upon them bravely — do thy worst,
And foul fall him that blenches
first !'

XIII

Not far advanced was morning
day 380

When Marmion did his troop ar-
ray

To Surrey's camp to ride ;
He had safe-conduct for his band
Beneath the royal seal and hand,

And Douglas gave a guide.
The ancient earl with stately grace
Would Clara on her palfrey place,
And whispered in an undertone,
' Let the hawk stoop, his prey is
flown.'

The train from out the castle
drew, 390

But Marmion stopped to bid adieu :
' Though something I might
plain,' he said,

' Of cold respect to stranger guest,

Sent hither by your king's behest,
While in Tantallon's towers I
stayed,

Part we in friendship from your
land,

And, noble earl, receive my
hand.' —

But Douglas round him drew his
cloak,

Folded his arms, and thus he
spoke : —

' My manors, halls, and bowers
shall still 400

Be open at my sovereign's will
To each one whom he lists, how-
e'er

Unmeet to be the owner's peer.
My castles are my king's alone,
From turret to foundation-stone —
The hand of Douglas is his own,
And never shall in friendly grasp
The hand of such as Marmion
clasp.'

XIV

Burned Marmion's swarthy cheek
like fire 409

And shook his very frame for ire,
And — ' This to me !' he said,
' An 't were not for thy hoary
beard,

Such hand as Marmion's had not
spared

To cleave the Douglas' head !
And first I tell thee, haughty peer,
He who does England's message
here,

Although the meanest in her state,
May well, proud Angus, be thy
mate ;

And, Douglas, more I tell thee
here,

Even in thy pitch of pride, 420
Here in thy hold, thy vassals
near, —

Nay, never look upon your lord,
And lay your hands upon your
sword, —

I tell thee, thou 'rt defied !
And if thou saidst I am not peer
To any lord in Scotland here,

Lowland or Highland, far or near,
 Lord Angus, thou hast lied !'
 On the earl's cheek the flush of
 rage

O'ercame the ashen hue of age :
 Fierce he broke forth, — ' And dar-
 est thou then 431

To beard the lion in his den,
 The Douglas in his hall ?
 And hopest thou hence unscathed
 to go ? —

No, by Saint Bride of Bothwell,
 no !

Up drawbridge, grooms — what,
 warder, ho !

Let the portcullis fall.' —
 Lord Marmion turned, — well was
 his need, —

And dashed the rowels in his
 steed,

Like arrow through the archway
 sprung, 440

The ponderous grate behind him
 rung ;

To pass there was such scanty
 room,

The bars descending razed his
 plume.

XV

The steed along the drawbridge
 flies

Just as it trembled on the rise ;
 Not lighter does the swallow skim
 Along the smooth lake's level
 brim :

And when Lord Marmion reached
 his band,

He halts, and turns with clenched
 hand,

And shout of loud defiance pours,
 And shook his gauntlet at the
 towers. 451

' Horse ! horse ! ' the Douglas
 cried, ' and chase ! '

But soon he reined his fury's pace :
 ' A royal messenger he came,

Though most unworthy of the
 name. —

A letter forged ! Saint Jude to
 speed !

Did ever knight so foul a deed ?
 At first in heart it liked me ill
 When the king praised his clerkly
 skill.

Thanks to Saint Bothan, son of
 mine, 460

Save Gawain, ne'er could pen a
 line ;

So swore I, and I swear it still,
 Let my boy-bishop fret his fill. —
 Saint Mary mend my fiery mood !

Old age ne'er cools the Douglas
 blood,

I thought to slay him where he
 stood.

' T is pity of him too,' he cried :
 ' Bold can he speak and fairly ride,
 I warrant him a warrior tried.'

With this his mandate he re-
 calls, 470

And slowly seeks his castle halls.

XVI

The day in Marmion's journey
 wore ;

Yet, ere his passion's gust was
 o'er,

They crossed the heights of Stan-
 rig-moor.

His troop more closely there he
 scanned,

And missed the Palmer from the
 band.

' Palmer or not,' young Blount did
 say,

' He parted at the peep of day ;
 Good sooth, it was in strange ar-
 ray.'

' In what array ? ' said Marmion
 quick. 480

' My lord, I ill can spell the trick ;
 But all night long with clink and
 bang

Close to my couch did hammers
 clang ;

At dawn the falling drawbridge
 rang,

And from a loophole while I peep,
 Old Bell-the-Cat came from the
 keep,

Wrapped in a gown of sables fair,

As fearful of the morning air ;
 Beneath, when that was blown
 aside,
 A rusty shirt of mail I spied. 490
 By Archibald won in bloody work
 Against the Saracen and Turk :
 Last night it hung not in the hall ;
 I thought some marvel would be-
 fall.
 And next I saw them saddled lead
 Old Cheviot forth, the earl's best
 steed,
 A matchless horse, though some-
 thing old,
 Prompt in his paces, cool and
 bold.
 I heard the Sheriff Sholto say
 The earl did much the Master
 pray 500
 To use him on the battle-day,
 But he preferred '— 'Nay, Henry,
 cease !
 Thou sworn horse-courser, hold
 thy peace. —
 Eustace, thou bear'st a brain — I
 pray,
 What did Blount see at break of
 day ?' —

XVII

' In brief, my lord, we both de-
 scribed —
 For then I stood by Henry's side —
 The Palmer mount and outwards
 ride
 Upon the earl's own favorite
 steed.
 All sheathed he was in armor
 bright, 510
 And much resembled that same
 knight
 Subdued by you in Cotswold fight ;
 Lord Angus wished him
 speed.' —
 The instant that Fitz-Eustace
 spoke,
 A sudden light on Marmion
 broke : —
 ' Ah ! dastard fool, to reason lost !'
 He muttered ; ' 'T was nor fay nor
 ghost

I met upon the moonlight wold,
 But living man of earthly mould. —
 O dotage blind and gross ! 520
 Had I but fought as wont, one
 thrust
 Had laid De Wilton in the dust,
 My path no more to cross. —
 How stand we now ? — he told his
 tale
 To Douglas, and with some avail ;
 'T was therefore gloomed his
 rugged brow. —
 Will Surrey dare to entertain
 'Gainst Marmion charge disproved
 and vain ?
 Small risk of that, I trow.
 Yet Clare's sharp questions must I
 shun, 530
 Must separate Constance from the
 nun —
 ' Oh ! what a tangled web we weave
 When first we practise to deceive !
 A Palmer too ! — no wonder why
 I felt rebuked beneath his eye ;
 I might have known there was
 but one
 Whose look could quell Lord Mar-
 mion.'

XVIII

Stung with these thoughts, he
 urged to speed
 His troop, and reached at eve the
 Tweed,
 Where Lennel's convent closed
 their march. 540
 There now is left but one frail arch,
 Yet mourn thou not its cells ;
 Our time a fair exchange has
 made :
 Hard by, in hospitable shade,
 A reverend pilgrim dwells,
 Well worth the whole Bernardine
 brood
 That e'er wore sandal, frock, or
 hood. —
 Yet did Saint Bernard's abbot
 there
 Give Marmion entertainment fair,
 And lodging for his train and
 Clare. 550

Next morn the baron climbed the tower,
 To view afar the Scottish power,
 Encamped on Flodden edge;
 The white pavilions made a show
 Like remnants of the winter snow
 Along the dusky ridge.
 Long Marmion looked :— at length
 his eye
 Unusual movement might descry
 Amid the shifting lines;
 The Scottish host drawn out ap-
 pears, 560
 For, flashing on the hedge of
 spears,
 The eastern sunbeam shines.
 Their front now deepening, now
 extending,
 Their flank inclining, wheeling,
 bending,
 Now drawing back, and now de-
 scending,
 The skilful Marmion well could
 know
 They watched the motions of some
 foe
 Who traversed on the plain below.

XIX

Even so it was. From Flodden
 ridge
 The Scots beheld the English
 host 570
 Leave Barmore-wood, their even-
 ing post.
 And heedful watched them as
 they crossed
 The Till by Twisel Bridge.
 High sight it is and haughty,
 while
 They dive into the deep defile;
 Beneath the caverned cliff they
 fall,
 Beneath the castle's airy wall.
 By rock, by oak, by hawthorn-
 tree,
 Troop after troop are disappear-
 ing;
 Troop after troop their banners
 rearing 580
 Upon the eastern bank you see;

Still pouring down the rocky den
 Where flows the sullen Till,
 And rising from the dim-wood
 glen,
 Standards on standards, men on
 men,
 In slow succession still,
 And sweeping o'er the Gothic arch,
 And pressing on, in ceaseless
 march,
 To gain the opposing hill.
 That morn, to many a trumpet
 clang, 590
 Twisel! thy rock's deep echo rang;
 And many a chief of birth and
 rank,
 Saint Helen! at thy fountain drank.
 Thy hawthorn glade, which now
 we see
 In spring-tide bloom so lavishly,
 Had then from many an axe its
 doom,
 To give the marching columns
 room.

XX

And why stands Scotland idly now,
 Dark Flodden! on thy airy brow,
 Since England gains the pass the
 while, 600
 And struggles through the deep
 defile?
 What checks the fiery soul of
 James?
 Why sits that champion of the
 dames
 Inactive on his steed,
 And sees, between him and his
 land,
 Between him and Tweed's south-
 ern strand,
 His host Lord Surrey lead?
 What vails the vain knight-errant's
 brand?—
 O Douglas, for thy leading wand!
 Fierce Randolph, for thy speed!
 Oh! for one hour of Wallace wight,
 Or well-skilled Bruce, to rule the
 fight 612
 And cry, 'Saint Andrew and our
 right!'

Another sight had seen that morn,
From Fate's dark book a leaf been
torn,
And Flodden had been Bannock-
bourne! —

The precious hour has passed in
vain,
And England's host has gained the
plain,
Wheeling their march and circling
still ⁶¹⁹
Around the base of Flodden hill.

XXI

Ere yet the bands met Marmion's
eye,
Fitz-Eustace shouted loud and
high,
'Hark! hark! my lord, an English
drum!
And see ascending squadrons
come

Between Tweed's river and the
hill,
Foot, horse, and cannon! Hap
what hap,

My basnet to a prentice cap,
Lord Surrey's o'er the Till! —
Yet more! yet more! — how fair
arrayed

They fly from out the hawthorn
shade, ⁶³⁰

And sweep so gallant by!
With all their banners bravely
spread,

And all their armor flashing high,
Saint George might waken from
the dead,

To see fair England's standards
fly.' —

'Stint in thy prate,' quoth Blount,
'thou 'dst best,

And listen to our lord's behest.' —
With kindling brow Lord Marmion
said,

'This instant be our band arrayed;
The river must be quickly crossed,
That we may join Lord Surrey's
host. ⁶⁴¹

If fight King James, — as well I
trust

That fight he will, and fight he
must, —

The Lady Clare behind our lines
Shall tarry while the battle joins.'

XXII

Himself he swift on horseback
threw,

Scarce to the abbot bade adieu,
Far less would listen to his prayer
To leave behind the helpless Clare.
Down to the Tweed his band he
drew, ⁶⁵⁰

And muttered as the flood they
view,

'The pheasant in the falcon's claw,
He scarce will yield to please a
daw;

Lord Angus may the abbot awe,
So Clare shall bide with me.'
Then on that dangerous ford and
deep

Where to the Tweed Leat's eddies
creep

He ventured desperately:
And not a moment will he bide
Till squire or groom before him
ride; ⁶⁶⁰

Headmost of all he stems the tide,
And stems it gallantly.

Eustace held Clare upon her horse,
Old Hubert led her rein,

Stoutly they braved the current's
course,

And, though far downward driven
perforce,

The southern bank they gain.
Behind them straggling came to
shore,

As best they might, the train:
Each o'er his head his yew-bow
bore, ⁶⁷⁰

A caution not in vain;
Deep need that day that every
string,

By wet unharmed, should sharply
ring.

A moment then Lord Marmion
stayed,

And breathed his steed, his men
arrayed,

Then forward moved his band,
 Until, Lord Surrey's rear-guard
 won,
 He halted by a cross of stone,
 That on a hillock standing lone
 Did all the field command. 680

XXIII

Hence might they see the full array
 Of either host for deadly fray;
 Their marshalled lines stretched
 east and west,

And fronted north and south,
 And distant salutation passed
 From the loud cannon mouth;
 Not in the close successive rattle
 That breathes the voice of modern
 battle,

But slow and far between.
 The hillock gained, Lord Marmion
 stayed: 690

'Here, by this cross,' he gently
 said,

'You well may view the scene.
 Here shalt thou tarry, lovely Clare:
 Oh! think of Marmion in thy
 prayer!—

Thou wilt not?—well, no less my
 care

Shall, watchful, for thy weal pre-
 pare. —

You, Blount and Eustace, are her
 guard,

With ten picked archers of my
 train;

With England if the day go hard,
 To Berwick speed amain. — 700

But if we conquer, cruel maid,
 My spoils shall at your feet be
 laid,

When here we meet again.'
 He waited not for answer there,
 And would not mark the maid's
 despair,

Nor heed the discontented look
 From either squire, but spurred
 amain,

And, dashing through the battle-
 plain,

His way to Surrey took.

XXIV

'The good Lord Marmion, by my
 life! 710

Welcome to danger's hour!—
 Short greeting serves in time of
 strife. —

Thus have I ranged my power:
 Myself will rule this central host,
 Stout Stanley fronts their right,
 My sons command the vaward
 post,

With Brian Tunstall, stainless
 knight;

Lord Dacre, with his horsemen
 light,

Shall be in rearward of the fight,
 And succor those that need it
 most. 720

Now, gallant Marmion, well I
 know,

Would gladly to the vanguard
 go;

Edmund, the Admiral, Tunstall
 there,

With thee their charge will blithe-
 ly share;

There fight thine own retainers
 too

Beneath De Burg, thy steward
 true.'

'Thanks, noble Surrey!' Marmion
 said,

Nor further greeting there he paid,
 But, parting like a thunderbolt,

First in the vanguard made a
 halt, 730

Where such a shout there rose
 Of 'Marmion! Marmion!' that the
 cry,

Up Flodden mountain shrilling
 high,

Startled the Scottish foes.

XXV

Blount and Fitz-Eustace rested
 still

With Lady Clare upon the hill,
 On which—for far the day was
 spent—

The western sunbeams now were
 bent;

The cry they heard, its meaning
knew,
Could plain their distant comrades
view :

74^o

Sadly to Blount did Eustace say,
'Unworthy office here to stay!
No hope of gilded spurs to-day. —
But see ! look up ! on Flodden bent
The Scottish foe has fired his tent.'

And sudden, as he spoke,
From the sharp ridges of the hill,
All downward to the banks of Till,
Was wreathed in sable smoke.
Volumed and vast, and rolling far,
The cloud enveloped Scotland's
war

75¹

As down the hill they broke ;
Nor martial shout, nor minstrel
tone,
Announced their march ; their
tread alone,
At times one warning trumpet
blown,

At times a stifled hum,
Told England, from his mountain-
throne

King James did rushing come.
Scarce could they hear or see their
foes

75⁹

Until at weapon-point they close. —
They close in clouds of smoke and
dust,

With sword-sway and with lance's
thrust ;

And such a yell was there,
Of sudden and portentous birth,
As if men fought upon the earth,
And fiends in upper air ;

Oh ! life and death were in the
shout,

Recoil and rally, charge and rout,
And triumph and despair.

Long looked the anxious squires ;
their eye

77^o

Could in the darkness nought de-
sery.

XXVI

At length the freshening western
blast

Aside the shroud of battle cast ;

And first the ridge of mingled
spears

Above the brightening cloud ap-
pears,

And in the smoke the pennons
flew,

As in the storm the white sea-
mew.

Then marked they, dashing broad
and far,

The broken billows of the war,
And plumed crests of chieftains
brave

78^o

Floating like foam upon the wave ;
But nought distinct they see :

Wide raged the battle on the
plain ;

Spears shook and falchions flashed
amain ;

Fell England's arrow-flight like
rain ;

Crests rose, and stooped, and rose
again,

Wild and disorderly.

Amid the scene of tumult, high
They saw Lord Marmion's falcon
fly ;

And stainless Tunstall's banner
white,

79^o

And Edmund Howard's lion bright,
Still bear them bravely in the fight,
Although against them come

Of gallant Gordons many a one,
And many a stubborn Badenoch-
man,

And many a rugged Border clan,
With Huntly and with Home.

XXVII

Far on the left, unseen the while,
Stanley broke Lennox and Ar-
gyle,

Though there the western moun-
taineer

80^o

Rushed with bare bosom on the
spear,

And flung the feeble targe aside,
And with both hands the broad-
sword plied.

'T was vain. — But Fortune, on the
right,

With fickle smile cheered Scotland's fight.

Then fell that spotless banner white,

The Howard's lion fell;
Yet still Lord Marmion's falcon flew

With wavering flight, while fiercer grew

Around the battle-yell. 810

The Border slogan rent the sky!

A Home! a Gordon! was the cry:
Loud were the clanging blows;

Advanced, — forced back, — now low, now high,

The pennon sunk and rose;
As bends the bark's-mast in the gale,

When rent are rigging, shrouds, and sail,

It wavered mid the foes.
No longer Blount the view could bear:

'By heaven and all its saints! I swear 820

I will not see it lost!
Fitz-Eustace, you with Lady Clare
May bid your beads and patter prayer, —

I gallop to the host.'
And to the fray he rode amain,
Followed by all the archer train.
The fiery youth, with desperate charge,

Made for a space an opening large, —

The rescued banner rose, — 829
But darkly closed the war around,
Like pine-tree rooted from the ground

It sank among the foes.
Then Eustace mounted too, — yet stayed,

As loath to leave the helpless maid,

When, fast as shaft can fly,
Bloodshot his eyes, his nostrils spread,

The loose rein dangling from his head,

Housing and saddle bloody red,

Lord Marmion's steed rushed by;

And Eustace, maddening at the sight, 840

A look and sign to Clara cast
To mark he would return in haste,

Then plunged into the fight.

XXVIII

Ask me not what the maiden feels,
Left in that dreadful hour alone:

Perchance her reason stoops or reels;

Perchance a courage, not her own,

Braces her mind to desperate tone. —

The scattered van of England wheels; —

She only said, as loud in air 850
The tumult roared, 'Is Wilton there?' —

They fly, or, maddened by despair,

Fight but to die, — 'Is Wilton there?'

With that, straight up the hill there rode

Two horsemen drenched with gore,

And in their arms, a helpless load,
A wounded knight they bore.

His hand still strained the broken brand;

His arms were smeared with blood and sand.

Dragged from among the horses' feet, 860

With dinted shield and helmet beat,

The falcon-crest and plumage gone,

Can that be haughty Marmion! . . .
Young Blount his armor did unlace,

And, gazing on his ghastly face,
Said, 'By Saint George, he's gone!

That spear-wound has our master sped,

And see the deep cut on his head !
 Good-night to Marmion, '—
 'Unnurtured Blount ! thy brawling
 cease : 870
 He opes his eyes, ' said Eustace ;
 ' peace !'

XXIX

When, doffed his casque, he felt
 free air,
 Around gan Marmion wildly stare :
 ' Where 's Harry Blount ? Fitz-
 Eustace where ?
 Linger ye here, ye hearts of hare !
 Redeem my pennon, — charge
 again !
 Cry, " Marmion to the rescue ! " —
 Vain !
 Last of my race, on battle-plain
 That shout shall ne'er be heard
 again ! —
 Yet my last thought is England's
 — fly, 880
 To Dacre bear my signet-ring ;
 Tell him his squadrons up to
 bring. —
 Fitz-Eustace, to Lord Surrey hie :
 Tunstall lies dead upon the field,
 His lifeblood stains the spotless
 shield ;
 Edmund is down ; my life is reft ;
 The Admiral alone is left.
 Let Stanley charge with spur of
 fire, —
 With Chester charge, and Lanca-
 shire,
 Full upon Scotland's central host,
 Or victory and England's lost. — 891
 Must I bid twice ? — hence, var-
 lets ! fly ! —
 Leave Marmion here alone — to
 die.
 They parted, and alone he lay ;
 Clare drew her from the sight
 away,
 Till pain wrung forth a lowly moan,
 And half he murmured, ' Is there
 none
 Of all my halls have nurst,
 Page, squire, or groom, one cup to
 bring

Of blessed water from the spring,
 To slake my dying thirst !' 901

XXX

O Woman ! in our hours of ease
 Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,
 And variable as the shade
 By the light quivering aspen made ;
 When pain and anguish wring the
 brow,
 A ministering angel thou ! —
 Scarce were the piteous accents
 said,
 When with the baron's casque the
 maid
 To the high streamlet ran : 910
 Forgot were hatred, wrongs, and
 fears ;
 The plaintive voice alone she
 hears,
 Sees but the dying man.
 She stooped her by the runnel's
 side,
 But in abhorrence backward
 drew ;
 For, oozing from the mountain's
 side
 Where raged the war, a dark-red
 tide
 Was curdling in the streamlet
 blue.
 Where shall she turn ? — behold
 her mark
 A little fountain cell, 920
 Where water, clear as diamond-
 spark,
 In a stone basin fell.
 Above, some half-worn letters say,
 Drink, warr, pilgrim, drink, and
 pray.
 For, the, kind, soul, of, Sibyl, Greg.
 Who, built, this, cross, and, well.
 She filled the helm and back she
 hied,
 And with surprise and joy espied
 A monk supporting Marmion's
 head ; 929
 A pious man, whom duty brought
 To dubious verge of battle fought,
 To shrieve the dying, bless the
 dead.

XXXI

Deep drank Lord Marmion of the
wave,

And, as she stooped his brow to
lave —

'Is it the hand of Clare,' he said,
'Or injured Constance, bathes my
head?'

Then, as remembrance rose, —
'Speak not to me of shrift or
prayer!

I must redress her woes.
Short space, few words, are mine
to spare; 940

Forgive and listen, gentle
Clare!' —

'Alas!' she said, 'the while, —
Oh! think of your immortal weal!
In vain for Constance is your
zeal;

She — died at Holy Isle.' —
Lord Marmion started from the
ground

As light as if he felt no wound,
Though in the action burst the
tide

In torrents from his wounded
side.

'Then it was truth,' he said — 'I
knew 950

That the dark presage must be
true. —

I would the Fiend, to whom be-
longs

The vengeance due to all her
wrongs,

Would spare me but a day!
For wasting fire, and dying groan,
And priests slain on the altar
stone,

Might bribe him for delay.
It may not be! — this dizzy
trance —

Curse on yon base marauder's
lance,

And doubly cursed my failing
brand! 960

A sinful heart makes feeble hand.'
Then fainting down on earth he
sunk,

Supported by the trembling monk.

XXXII

With fruitless labor Clara bound
And strove to stanch the gushing
wound;

The monk with unavailing cares
Exhausted all the Church's
prayers.

Ever, he said, that, close and near,
A lady's voice was in his ear,
And that the priest he could not
hear; 970

For that she ever sung,
'In the lost battle, borne down by
the flying,

Where mingles war's rattle with
groans of the dying!'

So the notes rung. —
'Avoid thee, Fiend! — with cruel
hand

Shake not the dying sinner's
sand! —

Oh! look, my son, upon yon sign
Of the Redeemer's grace divine;

Oh! think on faith and bliss! —
By many a death-bed I have been,
And many a sinner's parting
seen, 981

But never aught like this.' —
The war, that for a space did fail,
Now trebly thundering swelled
the gale,

And 'Stanley!' was the cry. —
A light on Marmion's visage
spread,

And fired his glazing eye;
With dying hand above his head
He shook the fragment of his
blade,

And shouted 'Victory! — 990
Charge, Chester, charge! On,
Stanley, on!'

Were the last words of Marmion.

XXXIII

By this, though deep the evening
fell,

Still rose the battle's deadly swell,
For still the Scots around their
king,

Unbroken, fought in desperate
ring.

Where 's now their victor vaward
wing,

Where Huntly, and where
Home?—

Oh! for a blast of that dread horn,

On Fontarabian echoes borne, 1000

That to King Charles did come,

When Rowland brave, and Olivier,

And every paladin and peer,

On Roncesvalles died!

Such blasts might warn them, not
in vain,

To quit the plunder of the slain

And turn the doubtful day again,

While yet on Flodden side

Afar the Royal Standard flies,

And round it toils and bleeds and

dies 1010

Our Caledonian pride!

In vain the wish — for far away,

While spoil and havoc mark their
way,

Near Sibyl's Cross the plunderers
stray. —

'O lady,' cried the monk, 'away!'

And placed her on her steed,

And led her to the chapel fair

Of Tilmouth upon Tweed.

There all the night they spent in

prayer,

And at the dawn of morning there

She met her kinsman, Lord Fitz-

Clare. 1021

XXXIV

But as they left the darkening
heath

More desperate grew the strife of
death.

The English shafts in volleys
hailed,

In headlong charge their horse as-
sailed;

Front, flank, and rear, the squad-
rons sweep

To break the Scottish circle deep

That fought around their king.

But yet, though thick the shafts as
snow,

Though charging knights like
whirlwinds go, 1030

Though billmen ply the ghastly
blow,

Unbroken was the ring;

The stubborn spearmen still made
good

Their dark impenetrable wood,

Each stepping where his comrade
stood

The instant that he fell.

No thought was there of dastard
flight;

Linked in the serried phalanx
tight,

Groom fought like noble, squire
like knight,

As fearlessly and well, 1040

Till utter darkness closed her wing

O'er their thin host and wounded
king.

Then skilful Surrey's sage com-
mands

Led back from strife his shattered
bands;

And from the charge they drew,
As mountain-waves from wasted

lands

Sweep back to ocean blue.

Then did their loss his foemen
know;

Their king, their lords, their might-
iest low,

They melted from the field, as
snow, 1050

When streams are swoln and
south winds blow,

Dissolves in silent dew.

Tweed's echoes heard the cease-
less plash,

While many a broken band

Disordered through her currents
dash,

To gain the Scottish land;

To town and tower, to down and
dale,

To tell red Flodden's dismal tale,

And raise the universal wail.

Tradition, legend, tune, and song

Shall many an age that wail pro-
long; 1061

Still from the sire the son shall
hear

Of the stern strife and carnage
 drear
 Of Flodden's fatal field,
 Where shivered was fair Scotland's
 spear
 And broken was her shield!

XXXV

Day dawns upon the mountain's
 side.
 There, Scotland! lay thy bravest
 pride,
 Chiefs, knights, and nobles, many
 a one;
 The sad survivors all are
 gone. — 1070
 View not that corpse mistrustfully,
 Defaced and mangled though it
 be;
 Nor to yon Border castle high
 Look northward with upbraiding
 eye;
 Nor cherish hope in vain
 That, journeying far on foreign
 strand,
 The Royal Pilgrim to his land
 May yet return again.
 He saw the wreck his rashness
 wrought;
 Reckless of life, he desperate
 fought, 1080
 And fell on Flodden plain:
 And well in death his trusty
 brand,
 Firm clenched within his manly
 hand,
 Beseemed the monarch slain.
 But oh! how changed since yon
 blithe night! —
 Gladly I turn me from the sight
 Unto my tale again.

XXXVI

Short is my tale: — Fitz-Eustace'
 care
 A pierced and mangled body bare
 To moated Lichfield's lofty
 pile; 1090
 And there, beneath the southern
 aisle,

A tomb with Gothic sculpture
 fair
 Did long Lord Marmion's image
 bear. —
 Now vainly for its site you look;
 'T was levelled when fanatic
 Brook
 The fair cathedral stormed and
 took,
 But, thanks to Heaven and good
 Saint Chad,
 A guerdon meet the spoiler
 had! —
 There erst was martial Marmion
 found,
 His feet upon a couchant
 hound, 1100
 His hands to heaven upraised;
 And all around, on scutcheon rich,
 And tablet carved, and fretted
 niche,
 His arms and feats were
 blazed.
 And yet, though all was carved so
 fair,
 And priest for Marmion breathed
 the prayer,
 The last Lord Marmion lay not
 there.
 From Ettrick woods a peasant
 swain
 Followed his lord to Flodden
 plain, —
 One of those flowers whom plain-
 tive lay 1110
 In Scotland mourns as 'wede
 away:'
 Sore wounded, Sibyl's Cross he
 spied,
 And dragged him to its foot, and
 died
 Close by the noble Marmion's
 side.
 The spoilers stripped and gashed
 the slain,
 And thus their corpses were mis-
 ta'en;
 And thus in the proud baron's
 tomb
 The lowly woodsman took the
 room.

XXXVII

Less easy task it were to show
Lord Marmion's nameless grave
and low. 1120

They dug his grave e'en where he
lay,

But every mark is gone:
Time's wasting hand has done
away

The simple Cross of Sibyl Grey,
And broke her font of stone;
But yet from out the little hill
Oozes the slender springlet still.

Oft halts the stranger there,
For thence may best his curious
eye

The memorable field descry; 1130
And shepherd boys repair

To seek the water-flag and rush,
And rest them by the hazel bush,
And plait their garlands fair,
Nor dream they sit upon the grave
That holds the bones of Marmion
brave.—

When thou shalt find the little hill,
With thy heart commune and be
still.

If ever in temptation strong
Thou left'st the right path for the
wrong, 1140

If every devious step thus trod
Still led thee further from the
road,

Dread thou to speak presumptu-
ous doom

On noble Marmion's lowly tomb;
But say, 'He died a gallant
knight,

With sword in hand, for England's
right.'

XXXVIII

I do not rhyme to that dull elf
Who cannot image to himself
That all through Flodden's dismal
night

Wilton was foremost in the
fight, 1150

That when brave Surrey's steed
was slain

'T was Wilton mounted him again;

'T was Wilton's brand that deep-
est hewed

Amid the spearmen's stubborn
wood:

Unnamed by Holinshed or Hall,
He was the living soul of all;
That, after fight, his faith made
plain,

He won his rank and lands again,
And charged his old paternal
shield

With bearings won on Flodden
Field. 1160

Nor sing I to that simple maid
To whom it must in terms be said
That king and kinsmen did agree
To bless fair Clara's constancy;
Who cannot, unless I relate,
Paint to her mind the bridal's
state, —

That Wolsey's voice the blessing
spoke,

More, Sands, and Denny, passed
the joke;

That bluff King Hal the curtain
drew,

And Katherine's hand the stocking
threw; 1170

And afterwards, for many a day,
That it was held enough to say,
In blessing to a wedded pair,
'Love they like Wilton and like
Clare!'

L'ENVOY

TO THE READER

WHY then a final note prolong,
Or lengthen out a closing song,
Unless to bid the gentles speed,
Who long have listed to my rede?
To statesmen grave, if such may
deign

To read the minstrel's idle strain,
Sound head, clean hand, and pier-
cing wit,

And patriotic heart — as PITT!
A garland for the hero's crest,
And twined by her he loves the
best!

To every lovely lady bright,
 What can I wish but faithful
 knight?
 To every faithful lover too,
 What can I wish but lady true?
 And knowledge to the studious
 sage,
 And pillow soft to head of age!

To thee, dear school-boy, whom
 my lay
 Has cheated of thy hour of play,
 Light task and merry holiday!
 To all, to each, a fair good-
 night,
 And pleasing dreams, and slum-
 bers light!

THE LADY OF THE LAKE

TO

THE MOST NOBLE

JOHN JAMES, MARQUIS OF ABERCORN,
 &c., &c., &c.,

THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED BY

THE AUTHOR

ARGUMENT

THE scene of the following Poem is laid chiefly in the vicinity of Loch Katrine, in the Western Highlands of Perthshire. The time of Action includes Six Days, and the transactions of each Day occupy a Canto.

CANTO FIRST

THE CHASE

HARP of the North! that moulder-
 ing long hast hung
 On the witch-elm that shades
 Saint Fillan's spring,
 And down the fitful breeze thy
 numbers flung,
 Till envious ivy did around thee
 cling,
 Muffling with verdant ringlet every
 string, —
 O Minstrel Harp, still must thine
 accents sleep?

Mid rustling leaves and fountains
 murmuring,
 Still must thy sweeter sounds
 their silence keep,
 Nor bid a warrior smile, nor teach
 a maid to weep?
 Not thus, in ancient days of Cale-
 don, 10
 Was thy voice mute amid the
 festal crowd,
 When lay of hopeless love, or glory
 won,
 Aroused the fearful or subdued
 the proud.

At each according pause was
heard aloud

Thine ardent symphony sublime
and high!

Fair dames and crested chiefs at-
tention bowed;

For still the burden of thy min-
strelsy

Was Knighthood's dauntless deed,
and Beauty's matchless eye.

O, wake once more! how rude
soe'er the hand

That ventures o'er thy magic
maze to stray; 20

O, wake once more! though scarce
my skill command

Some feeble echoing of thine
earlier lay:

Though harsh and faint, and soon
to die away,

And all unworthy of thy nobler
strain,

Yet if one heart throb higher at its
sway,

The wizard note has not been
touched in vain.

Then silent be no more! Enchant-
ress, wake again!

I

The stag at eve had drunk his fill,
Where danced the moon on Mo-
nan's rill,

And deep his midnight lair had
made 30

In lone Glenartney's hazel shade;
But when the sun his beacon red
Had kindled on Benvoirlich's head,
The deep-mouthed bloodhound's
heavy bay

Resounded up the rocky way,
And faint, from farther distance
borne,

Were heard the clanging hoof and
horn.

II

As Chief, who hears his warder
call,

'To arms! the foemen storm the
wall,'

The antlered monarch of the
waste 40

Sprung from his heathery couch
in haste.

But ere his fleet career he took,
The dew-drops from his flanks he
shook;

Like crested leader proud and
high

Tossed his beamed frontlet to the
sky;

A moment gazed adown the dale,
A moment snuffed the tainted

gale,

A moment listened to the cry,
That thickened as the chase drew
nigh;

Then, as the headmost foes ap-
peared, 50

With one brave bound the copse
he cleared,

And, stretching forward free and
far,

Sought the wild heaths of Uam-
Var.

III

Yelled on the view the opening
pack;

Rock, glen, and cavern paid them
back;

To many a mingled sound at once
The awakened mountain gave re-
sponse.

A hundred dogs bayed deep and
strong,

Clattered a hundred steeds along,
Their peal the merry horns rung
out, 60

A hundred voices joined the shout;
With hark and whoop and wild
halloo,

No rest Benvoirlich's echoes knew.
Far from the tumult fled the roe,
Close in her covert cowered the
doe,

The falcon, from her cairn on high,
Cast on the rout a wondering eye,
Till far beyond her piercing ken
The hurricane had swept the glen.
Faint, and more faint, its failing
din 70

Returned from cavern, cliff, and
linn,
And silence settled, wide and still,
On the lone wood and mighty hill.

IV

Less loud the sounds of sylvan war
Disturbed the heights of Uam-Var,
And roused the cavern where, 't is
told,

A giant made his den of old ;
For ere that steep ascent was won,
High in his pathway hung the sun,
And many a gallant, stayed per-
force, 80

Was fain to breathe his faltering
horse,

And of the trackers of the deer
Scarce half the lessening pack was
near ;

So shrewdly on the mountain-side
Had the bold burst their mettle
tried.

V

The noble stag was pausing now
Upon the mountain's southern
brow,

Where broad extended, far be-
neath,

The varied realms of fair Menteith.
With anxious eye he wandered
o'er 90

Mountain and meadow, moss and
moor,

And pondered refuge from his toil,
By far Lochard or Aberfoyle.

But nearer was the copsewood
gray

That waved and wept on Loch
Achray,

And mingled with the pine-trees
blue

On the bold cliffs of Benvenue.
Fresh vigor with the hope re-
turned,

With flying foot the heath he
spurned,

Held westward with unwearied
race, 100

And left behind the panting chase.

VI

'T were long to tell what steeds
gave o'er,

As swept the hunt through Cam-
busmore ;

What reins were tightened in de-
spair,

When rose Benledi's ridge in air ;
Who flagged upon Bochastle's

heath,
Who shunned to stem the flooded

Teith, —
For twice that day, from shore to

shore,
The gallant stag swam stoutly

o'er.
Few were the stragglers, following

far, 110
That reached the lake of Venna-
char ;

And when the Brigg of Turk was
won,

The headmost horseman rode
alone.

VII

Alone, but with unbated zeal,
That horseman plied the scourge

and steel ;
For jaded now, and spent with toil,

Embossed with foam, and dark
with soil,

While every gasp with sobs he
drew,

The laboring stag strained full in
view.

Two dogs of black Saint Hubert's
breed, 120

Unmatched for courage, breath,
and speed,

Fast on his flying traces came,
And all but won that desperate

game ;
For, scarce a spear's length from

his haunch,
Vindictive toiled the bloodhounds

stanch ;
Nor nearer might the dogs attain,

Nor farther might the quarry
strain.

Thus up the margin of the lake,

Between the precipice and brake,
O'er stock and rock their race they
take. 130

VIII

The Hunter marked that mountain high,
The lone lake's western boundary,
And deemed the stag must turn to bay,
Where that huge rampart barred the way;
Already glorying in the prize,
Measured his antlers with his eyes;
For the death-wound and death-halloo
Mustered his breath, his whinyard drew:—
But thundering as he came prepared,
With ready arm and weapon bared, 140
The wily quarry shunned the shock,
And turned him from the opposing rock;
Then, dashing down a darksome glen,
Soon lost to hound and Hunter's ken,
In the deep Trosachs' wildest nook
His solitary refuge took.
There, while close couched the thicket shed
Cold dews and wild flowers on his head,
He heard the baffled dogs in vain
Rave through the hollow pass amain, 150
Chiding the rocks that yelled again.

IX

Close on the hounds the Hunter came,
To cheer them on the vanished game;
But, stumbling in the rugged dell,
The gallant horse exhausted fell.

The impatient rider strove in vain
To rouse him with the spur and rein,
For the good steed, his labors o'er,
Stretched his stiff limbs, to rise no more;
Then, touched with pity and remorse, 160
He sorrowed o'er the expiring horse.
'I little thought, when first thy rein
I slacked upon the banks of Seine,
That Highland eagle e'er should feed
On thy fleet limbs, my matchless steed!
Woe worth the chase, woe worth the day,
That costs thy life, my gallant gray!'

X

Then through the dell his horn resounds,
From vain pursuit to call the hounds.
Back limped, with slow and crippled pace, 170
The sulky leaders of the chase;
Close to their master's side they pressed,
With drooping tail and humbled crest;
But still the dingle's hollow throat
Prolonged the swelling bugle-note.
The owlets started from their dream,
The eagles answered with their scream,
Round and around the sounds were cast,
Till echo seemed an answering blast; 179
And on the Hunter hied his way,
To join some comrades of the day,
Yet often paused, so strange the road,
So wondrous were the scenes it showed.

XI

The western waves of ebbing day
Rolled o'er the glen their level
way;

Each purple peak, each flinty
spire,

Was bathed in floods of living
fire.

But not a setting beam could glow
Within the dark ravines below,
Where twined the path in shadow
hid, 190

Round many a rocky pyramid,
Shooting abruptly from the dell
Its thunder-splintered pinnacle;
Round many an insulated mass,
The native bulwarks of the pass,
Huge as the tower which builders
vain

Presumptuous piled on Shinar's
plain.

The rocky summits, split and rent,
Formed turret, dome, or battle-
ment,

Or seemed fantastically set 200
With cupola or minaret,

Wild crests as pagod ever decked,
Or mosque of Eastern architect.
Nor were these earth-born castles
bare,

Nor lacked they many a banner
fair;

For, from their shivered brows
displayed,

Far o'er the unfathomable glade,
All twinkling with the dewdrop
sheen,

The brier-rose fell in streamers
green,

And creeping shrubs of thousand
dyes 210

Waved in the west-wind's summer
sighs.

XII

Boon nature scattered, free and
wild,

Each plant or flower, the moun-
tain's child.

Here eglantine embalmed the air,
Hawthorn and hazel mingled
there;

The primrose pale and violet
flower

Found in each clift a narrow
bower;

Foxglove and nightshade, side by
side,

Emblems of punishment and pride,
Grouped their dark hues with
every stain 220

The weather-beaten crags retain.
With boughs that quaked at every
breath,

Gray birch and aspen wept be-
neath;

Aloft, the ash and warrior oak
Cast anchor in the rifted rock;

And, higher yet, the pine-tree hung
His shattered trunk, and frequent
flung,

Where seemed the cliffs to meet on
high,

His boughs athwart the narrowed
sky.

Highest of all, where white peaks
glanced, 230

Where glistening streamers waved
and danced,

The wanderer's eye could barely
view

The summer heaven's delicious
blue;

So wondrous wild, the whole might
seem

The scenery of a fairy dream.

XIII

Onward, amid the copse 'gan peep
A narrow inlet, still and deep,

Affording scarce such breadth of
brim

As served the wild duck's brood
to swim.

Lost for a space, through thickets
veering, 240

But broader when again appear-
ing,

Tall rocks and tufted knolls their
face

Could on the dark-blue mirror
trace;

And farther as the Hunter strayed,

Still broader sweep its channels
made.
The shaggy mounds no longer
stood,
Emerging from entangled wood,
But, wave-encircled, seemed to
float,
Like castle girdled with its moat;
Yet broader floods extending still
Divide them from their parent
hill, 251
Till each, retiring, claims to be
An islet in an inland sea.

XIV

And now, to issue from the glen,
No pathway meets the wanderer's
ken,
Unless he climb with footing nice
A far-projecting precipice.
The broom's tough roots his ladder
made,
The hazel saplings lent their aid;
And thus an airy point he won,
Where, gleaming with the setting
sun, 261
One burnished sheet of living
gold,
Loch Katrine lay beneath him
rolled,
In all her length far winding
lay,
With promontory, creek, and bay,
And islands that, empurpled
bright,
Floated amid the livelier light,
And mountains that like giants
stand
To sentinel enchanted land.
High on the south, huge Benve-
nue 270
Down to the lake in masses threw
Crag, knolls, and mounds, con-
fusedly hurled,
The fragments of an earlier world;
A wildering forest feathered o'er
His ruined sides and summit hoar,
While on the north, through mid-
dle air,
Ben-an heaved high his forehead
bare.

XV

From the steep promontory gazed
The stranger, raptured and
amazed,
And, 'What a scene were here,'
he cried, 280
'For princely pomp or church-
man's pride!
On this bold brow, a lordly tower;
In that soft vale, a lady's bower;
On yonder meadow far away,
The turrets of a cloister gray;
How blithely might the bugle-horn
Chide on the lake the lingering
morn!
How sweet at eve the lover's lute
Chime when the groves were still
and mute!
And when the midnight moon
should lave 290
Her forehead in the silver wave,
How solemn on the ear would
come
The holy matins' distant hum,
While the deep peal's commanding
tone
Should wake, in yonder islet lone,
A sainted hermit from his cell,
To drop a bead with every knell!
And bugle, lute, and bell, and
all,
Should each bewildered stranger
call 299
To friendly feast and lighted hall.

XVI

'Blithe were it then to wander
here!
But now — beshrew yon nimble
deer —
Like that same hermit's, thin and
spare,
The copse must give my evening
fare;
Some mossy bank my couch must
be,
Some rustling oak my canopy.
Yet pass we that; the war and
chase
Give little choice of resting-
place; —

A summer night in greenwood
spent 309

Were but to-morrow's merriment:
But hosts may in these wilds
abound,

Such as are better missed than
found;

To meet with Highland plunderers
here

Were worse than loss of steed or
deer. —

I am alone; — my bugle-strain
May call some straggler of the
train;

Or, fall the worst that may be-
tide,

Ere now this falchion has been
tried.'

XVII

But scarce again his horn he
wound,

When lo! forth starting at the
sound, 320

From underneath an aged oak
That slanted from the islet rock,

A damsel guider of its way,
A little skiff shot to the bay,

That round the promontory steep
Led its deep line in graceful sweep,

Eddying, in almost viewless wave,
The weeping willow twig to lave,

And kiss, with whispering sound
and slow,

The beach of pebbles bright as
snow. 330

The boat had touched this silver
strand

Just as the Hunter left his stand,
And stood concealed amid the
brake,

To view this Lady of the Lake.
The maiden paused, as if again

She thought to catch the distant
strain.

With head upraised, and look in-
tent,

And eye and ear attentive bent,
And locks flung back, and lips

apart, 339
Like monument of Grecian art,

In listening mood, she seemed to
stand,

The guardian Naiad of the strand.

XVIII

And ne'er did Grecian chisel trace
A Nymph, a Naiad, or a Grace,

Of finer form or lovelier face!
What though the sun, with ardent

frown,
Had slightly tinged her cheek with

brown,
The sportive toil, which, short and

light,
Had dyed her glowing hue so

bright,
Served too in hastier swell to

show 350
Short glimpses of a breast of

snow:
What though no rule of courtly

grace
To measured mood had trained

her pace, —
A foot more light, a step more

true,
Ne'er from the heath-flower dashed

the dew;
E'en the slight harebell raised its

head,
Elastic from her airy tread:

What though upon her speech
there hung

The accents of the mountain
tongue, —

Those silver sounds, so soft, so
dear, 360

The listener held his breath to
hear!

XIX

A chieftain's daughter seemed the
maid;

Her satin snood, her silken plaid,
Her golden brooch, such birth be-

trayed.
And seldom was a snood amid

Such wild luxuriant ringlets hid.
Whose glossy black to shame

might bring
The plumage of the raven's wing.

And seldom o'er a breast so fair
 Mantled a plaid with modest care,
 And never brooch the folds combined³⁷¹
 Above a heart more good and kind.
 Her kindness and her worth to spy,
 You need but gaze on Ellen's eye;
 Not Katrine in her mirror blue
 Gives back the shaggy banks more true,
 Than every free-born glance confessed
 The guileless movements of her breast;
 Whether joy danced in her dark eye,
 Or woe or pity claimed a sigh,³⁸⁰
 Or filial love was glowing there,
 Or meek devotion poured a prayer,
 Or tale of injury called forth
 The indignant spirit of the North.
 One only passion unrevealed
 With maiden pride the maid concealed,
 Yet not less purely felt the flame;—
 O, need I tell that passion's name?

XX

Impatient of the silent horn,
 Now on the gale her voice was borne:—³⁹⁰
 'Father!' she cried; the rocks around
 Loved to prolong the gentle sound.
 Awhile she paused, no answer came;—
 'Malcolm, was thine the blast?'
 the name
 Less resolutely uttered fell,
 The echoes could not catch the swell.
 'A stranger I,' the Huntsman said,
 Advancing from the hazel shade.
 The maid, alarmed, with hasty oar
 Pushed her light shallop from the shore,⁴⁰⁰
 And when a space was gained between,

Closer she drew her bosom's screen;—
 So forth the startled swan would swing,
 So turn to prune his ruffled wing.
 Then safe, though fluttered and amazed,
 She paused, and on the stranger gazed.
 Not his the form, nor his the eye,
 That youthful maidens wont to fly.

XXI

On his bold visage middle age
 Had slightly pressed its signet sage,⁴¹⁰
 Yet had not quenched the open truth
 And fiery vehemence of youth;
 Forward and frolic glee was there,
 The will to do, the soul to dare,
 The sparkling glance, soon blown to fire,
 Of hasty love or headlong ire.
 His limbs were cast in manly mould
 For hardy sports or contest bold;
 And though in peaceful garb arrayed,⁴¹⁹
 And weaponless except his blade,
 His stately mien as well implied
 A high-born heart, a martial pride,
 As if a baron's crest he wore,
 And sheathed in armor trode the shore.
 Slighting the petty need he showed,
 He told of his benighted road;
 His ready speech flowed fair and free,
 In phrase of gentlest courtesy,
 Yet seemed that tone and gesture bland
 Less used to sue than to command.⁴³⁰

XXII

Awhile the maid the stranger eyed,
 And, reassured, at length replied,

That Highland halls were open
still

To wildered wanderers of the hill.
'Nor think you unexpected come
To yon lone isle, our desert home;
Before the heath had lost the dew
This morn, a couch was pulled for
you;

On yonder mountain's purple head
Have ptarmigan and heath-cock
bled, 440

And our broad nets have swept
the mere,

To furnish forth your evening
cheer.' —

'Now, by the rood, my lovely maid,
Your courtesy has erred,' he said;
'No right have I to claim, mis-
placed,

The welcome of expected guest.
A wanderer, here by fortune tost,
My way, my friends, my courser
lost,

I ne'er before, believe me, fair,
Have ever drawn your mountain
air, 450

Till on this lake's romantic strand
I found a fay in fairy land!' —

XXIII

'I well believe,' the maid replied,
As her light skiff approached the
side, —

'I well believe, that ne'er before
Your foot has trod Loch Katrine's
shore;

But yet, as far as yesternight,
Old Allan-bane foretold your
plight, —

A gray-haired sire, whose eye in-
tent 459

Was on the visioned future bent.
He saw your steed, a dappled gray,
Lie dead beneath the birchen way;
Painted exact your form and mien,
Your hunting-suit of Lincoln green,
That tasselled horn so gayly gilt,
That falchion's crooked blade and
hilt,

That cap with heron plumage
trim,

And yon two hounds so dark and
grim.

He bade that all should ready be
To grace a guest of fair degree;
But light I held his prophecy, 471
And deemed it was my father's
horn

Whose echoes o'er the lake were
borne.'

XXIV

The stranger smiled: — 'Since to
your home

A destined errant-knight I come,
Announced by prophet sooth and
old,

Doomed, doubtless, for achieve-
ment bold,

I'll lightly front each high emprise
For one kind glance of those bright
eyes. 479

Permit me first the task to guide
Your fairy frigate o'er the tide.'

The maid, with smile suppressed
and sly,

The toil unwonted saw him try;
For seldom, sure, if e'er before,
His noble hand had grasped an
oar:

Yet with main strength his strokes
he drew,

And o'er the lake the shallop flew;
With heads erect and whimpering
cry,

The hounds behind their passage
ply.

Nor frequent does the bright oar
break 490

The darkening mirror of the lake,
Until the rocky isle they reach,
And moor their shallop on the
beach.

XXV

The stranger viewed the shore
around;

'T was all so close with copsewood
bound,

Nor track nor pathway might de-
clare

That human foot frequented there,

Until the mountain maiden showed
 A clambering unsuspected road,
 That winded through the tangled
 screen, 500
 And opened on a narrow green,
 Where weeping birch and willow
 round
 With their long fibres swept the
 ground.
 Here, for retreat in dangerous
 hour,
 Some chief had framed a rustic
 bower.

XXVI

It was a lodge of ample size,
 But strange of structure and de-
 vice;
 Of such materials as around
 The workman's hand had readiest
 found.
 Lopped of their boughs, their hoar
 trunks bared, 510
 And by the hatchet rudely squared.
 To give the walls their destined
 height,
 The sturdy oak and ash unite;
 While moss and clay and leaves
 combined
 To fence each crevice from the
 wind.
 The lighter pine-trees overhead
 Their slender length for rafters
 spread,
 And withered heath and rushes
 dry
 Supplied a russet canopy.
 Due westward, fronting to the
 green, 520
 A rural portico was seen,
 Aloft on native pillars borne,
 Of mountain fir with bark unshorn,
 Where Ellen's hand had taught to
 twine
 The ivy and Idæan vine,
 The clematis, the favored flower
 Which boasts the name of virgin-
 bower,
 And every hardy plant could bear
 Loch Katrine's keen and search-
 ing air.

An instant in this porch she
 stayed, 530
 And gayly to the stranger said:
 'On heaven and on thy lady call,
 And enter the enchanted hall!'

XXVII

'My hope, my heaven, my trust
 must be,
 My gentle guide, in following
 thee!'

He crossed the threshold, — and a
 clang
 Of angry steel that instant rang.
 To his bold brow his spirit rushed,
 But soon for vain alarm he blushed,
 When on the floor he saw dis-
 played, 540
 Cause of the din, a naked blade
 Dropped from the sheath, that
 careless flung
 Upon a stag's huge antlers swung;
 For all around, the walls to grace,
 Hung trophies of the fight or
 chase:
 A target there, a bugle here,
 A battle-axe, a hunting-spear,
 And broadswords, bows, and ar-
 rows store,
 With the tusked trophies of the
 boar.
 Here grins the wolf as when he
 died, 550
 And there the wild-cat's brindled
 hide
 The frontlet of the elk adorns,
 Or mantles o'er the bison's horns;
 Pennons and flags defaced and
 stained,
 That blackening streaks of blood
 retained,
 And deer-skins, dappled, dun, and
 white,
 With otter's fur and seal's unite,
 In rude and uncouth tapestry all,
 To garnish forth the sylvan hall.

XXVIII

The wondering stranger round him
 gazed, 560

And next the fallen weapon
raised : —

Few were the arms whose sinewy
strength

Sufficed to stretch it forth at
length.

And as the brand he poised and
swayed,

'I never knew but one,' he said,
'Whose stalwart arm might brook
to wield

A blade like this in battle-field.'

She sighed, then smiled and took
the word :

'You see the guardian champion's
sword ;

569

As light it trembles in his hand

As in my grasp a hazel wand :

My sire's tall form might grace the
part

Of Ferragus or Ascabart,

But in the absent giant's hold

Are women now, and menials old.'

XXIX

The mistress of the mansion came,
Mature of age, a graceful dame,

Whose easy step and stately port

Had well become a princely court,

To whom, though more than kin-
dred knew,

580

Young Ellen gave a mother's
due.

Meet welcome to her guest she
made,

And every courteous rite was paid,
That hospitality could claim,

Though all unasked his birth and
name.

Such then the reverence to a guest,
That fellest foe might join the
feast,

And from his deadliest foeman's
door

Unquestioned turn, the banquet
o'er.

At length his rank the stranger
names,

590

'The Knight of Snowdown, James
Fitz-James ;

Lord of a barren heritage,

Which his brave sires, from age to
age,

By their good swords had held with
toil ;

His sire had fallen in such tur-
moil,

And he, God wot, was forced to
stand

Off for his right with blade in
hand.

This morning with Lord Moray's
train

He chased a stalwart stag in vain,
Outstripped his comrades, missed

the deer,

600

Lost his good steed, and wandered
here.'

XXX

Fain would the Knight in turn re-
quire

The name and state of Ellen's
sire.

Well showed the elder lady's mien
That courts and cities she had
seen ;

Ellen, though more her looks dis-
played

The simple grace of sylvan maid,
In speech and gesture, form and
face,

Showed she was come of gentle
race.

'T were strange in ruder rank to
find

610

Such looks, such manners, and
such mind.

Each hint the Knight of Snowdown
gave,

Dame Margaret heard with silence
grave ;

Or Ellen, innocently gay,

Turned all inquiry light away : —

'Weird women we ! by dale and
down

We dwell, afar from tower and
town.

We stem the flood, we ride the
blast,

On wandering knights our spells
we cast ;

While viewless minstrels touch
 the string, 620
 'T is thus our charmed rhymes we
 sing.
 She sung, and still a harp unseen
 Filled up the symphony between.

XXXI

SONG

'Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
 Sleep the sleep that knows not
 breaking;
 Dream of battled fields no more,
 Days of danger, nights of wak-
 ing.
 In our isle's enchanted hall,
 Hands unseen thy couch are
 strewing,
 Fairy strains of music fall, 630
 Every sense in slumber dewing.
 Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
 Dream of fighting fields no more;
 Sleep the sleep that knows not
 breaking,
 Morn of toil, nor night of waking.

'No rude sound shall reach thine
 ear,
 Armor's clang of war-steed
 champing,
 Trump nor pibroch summon here
 Mustering clan or squadron
 tramping.
 Yet the lark's shrill fife may
 come 640
 At the daybreak from the fallow,
 And the bittern sound his drum,
 Booming from the sedgy shallow.
 Ruder sounds shall none be near,
 Guards nor warders challenge
 here,
 Here's no war-steed's neigh and
 champing,
 Shouting clans or squadrons
 stamping.'

XXXII

She paused, — then, blushing, led
 the lay,
 To grace the stranger of the day.

Her mellow notes awhile pro-
 long 650
 The cadence of the flowing song,
 Till to her lips in measured frame
 The minstrel verse spontaneous
 came.

SONG CONTINUED

'Huntsman, rest! thy chase is
 done;
 While our slumbrous spells as-
 sail ye,
 Dream not, with the rising sun,
 Bugles here shall sound reveillé.
 Sleep! the deer is in his den;
 Sleep! thy hounds are by thee ly-
 ing; 659
 Sleep! nor dream in yonder glen
 How thy gallant steed lay dy-
 ing.
 Huntsman, rest! thy chase is
 done;
 Think not of the rising sun,
 For at dawning to assail ye
 Here no bugles sound reveillé.'

XXXIII

The hall was cleared, — the stran-
 ger's bed
 Was there of mountain heather
 spread,
 Where oft a hundred guests had
 lain,
 And dreamed their forest sports
 again.
 But vainly did the heath-flower
 shed 670
 Its moorland fragrance round his
 head;
 Not Ellen's spell had lulled to
 rest
 The fever of his troubled breast.
 In broken dreams the image rose
 Of varied perils, pains, and woes:
 His steed now flounders in the
 brake,
 Now sinks his barge upon the
 lake;
 Now leader of a broken host,
 His standard falls, his honor's
 lost.

Then,—from my couch may heaven-ly might 680

Chase that worst phantom of the night!—

Again returned the scenes of youth,

Of confident, undoubting truth ;
Again his soul he interchanged
With friends whose hearts were
long estranged.

They come, in dim procession led,
The cold, the faithless, and the
dead ;

As warm each hand, each brow
as gay,

As if they parted yesterday.

And doubt distracts him at the
view, — 690

O were his senses false or true ?

Dreamed he of death or broken
vow,

Or is it all a vision now ?

XXXIV

At length, with Ellen in a grove
He seemed to walk and speak of
love ;

She listened with a blush and
sigh,

His suit was warm, his hopes were
high.

He sought her yielded hand to
clasp,

And a cold gauntlet met his grasp :
The phantom's sex was changed
and gone, 700

Upon its head a helmet shone ;
Slowly enlarged to giant size,
With darkened cheek and threat-
ening eyes,

The grisly visage, stern and hoar,
To Ellen still a likeness bore. —
He woke, and, panting with af-
fright.

Recalled the vision of the night.
The hearth's decaying brands
were red,

And deep and dusky lustre shed,
Half showing, half concealing,
all 710

The uncouth trophies of the hall.

Mid those the stranger fixed his
eye

Where that huge falchion hung on
high,

And thoughts on thoughts, a
countless throng,

Rushed, chasing countless
thoughts along,

Until, the giddy whirl to cure,
He rose and sought the moonshine
pure.

XXXV

The wild rose, eglantine, and
broom

Wasted around their rich per-
fume ;

The birch-trees wept in fragrant
balm ; 720

The aspens slept beneath the
calm ;

The silver light, with quivering
glance,

Played on the water's still ex-
panse, —

Wild were the heart whose pas-
sion's sway

Could rage beneath the sober ray !
He felt its calm, that warrior

guest,
While thus he communed with his

breast :

' Why is it, at each turn I trace
Some memory of that exiled race ?

Can I not mountain maiden
spy, 730

But she must bear the Douglas
eye ?

Can I not view a Highland brand,
But it must match the Douglas
hand ?

Can I not frame a fevered dream,
But still the Douglas is the theme ?
I 'll dream no more, — by manly
mind

Not even in sleep is will resigned.
My midnight orisons said o'er,
I 'll turn to rest, and dream no
more.'

His midnight orisons he told, 740
A prayer with every bead of gold,

Consigned to heaven his cares and
woes,
And sunk in undisturbed repose,
Until the heath-cock shrilly crew,
And morning dawned on Benvenue.

CANTO SECOND

THE ISLAND

I

At morn the black-cock trims his
jetty wing,
'Tis morning prompts the lin-
net's blithest lay,
All Nature's children feel the
matin spring
Of life reviving, with reviving
day;
And while yon little bark glides
down the bay,
Wafting the stranger on his way
again,
Morn's genial influence roused a
minstrel gray,
And sweetly o'er the lake was
heard thy strain,
Mixed with the sounding harp, O
white-haired Allan-bane!

II

SONG

'Not faster yonder rowers'
might ¹⁰
Flings from their oars the spray,
Not faster yonder rippling bright,
That tracks the shallop's course
in light,
Melts in the lake away,
Than men from memory erase
The benefits of former days;
Then, stranger, go! good speed
the while,
Nor think again of the lonely isle.

'High place to thee in royal court,
High place in battled line, ²⁰
Good hawk and hound for sylvan
sport!

Where beauty sees the brave re-
sort,
The honored meed be thine!
True be thy sword, thy friend sin-
cere,
Thy lady constant, kind, and dear,
And lost in love's and friendship's
smile
Be memory of the lonely isle!

III

SONG CONTINUED

'But if beneath yon southern sky
A plaided stranger roam,
Whose drooping crest and stifled
sigh, ³⁰
And sunken cheek and heavy eye,
Pine for his Highland home;
Then, warrior, then be thine to
show
The care that soothes a wanderer's
woe;
Remember then thy hap erewhile,
A stranger in the lonely isle.

'Or if on life's uncertain main
Mishap shall mar thy sail;
If faithful, wise, and brave in vain,
Woe, want, and exile thou sustain
Beneath the fickle gale; ⁴¹
Waste not a sigh on fortune
changed,
On thankless courts, or friends es-
tranged,
But come where kindred worth
shall smile,
To greet thee in the lonely isle.'

IV

As died the sounds upon the tide,
The shallop reached the mainland
side,
And ere his onward way he took,
The stranger cast a lingering look,
Where easily his eye might reach
The Harper on the islet beach, ⁵¹
Reclined against a blighted tree,
As wasted, gray, and worn as he.
To minstrel meditation given,

His reverend brow was raised to
 heaven,
 As from the rising sun to claim
 A sparkle of inspiring flame.
 His hand, reclined upon the wire,
 Seemed watching the awakening
 fire;
 So still he sat as those who wait
 Till judgment speak the doom of
 fate 61
 So still, as if no breeze might dare
 To lift one lock of hoary hair;
 So still, as life itself were fled
 In the last sound his harp had
 sped.

V

Upon a rock with lichens wild,
 Beside him Ellen sat and smiled. —
 Smiled she to see the stately drake
 Lead forth his fleet upon the lake,
 While her vexed spaniel from the
 beach 70
 Bayed at the prize beyond his
 reach?
 Yet tell me, then, the maid who
 knows,
 Why deepened on her cheek the
 rose? —
 Forgive, forgive, Fidelity!
 Perchance the maiden smiled to
 see
 Yon parting lingerer wave adieu,
 And stop and turn to wave anew;
 And, lovely ladies, ere your ire
 Condemn the heroine of my lyre,
 Show me the fair would scorn to
 spy 80
 And prize such conquest of her
 eye!

VI

While yet he loitered on the spot,
 It seemed as Ellen marked him
 not;
 But when he turned him to the
 glade,
 One courteous parting sign she
 made;
 And after, oft the knight would
 say,

That not when prize of festal day
 Was dealt him by the brightest
 fair

Who e'er wore jewel in her hair,
 So highly did his bosom swell 90
 As at that simple mute farewell.
 Now with a trusty mountain-guide,
 And his dark stag-hounds by his
 side,
 He parts, — the maid, unconscious
 still,
 Watched him wind slowly round
 the hill;
 But when his stately form was hid,
 The guardian in her bosom chid, —
 'Thy Malcolm! vain and selfish
 maid!'

'T was thus upbraiding conscience
 said, —
 'Not so had Malcolm idly hung 100
 On the smooth phrase of Southern
 tongue;
 Not so had Malcolm strained his
 eye
 Another step than thine to spy.' —
 'Wake, Allan-bane,' aloud she
 cried
 To the old minstrel by her side, —
 'Arouse thee from thy moody
 dream!

I'll give thy harp heroic theme,
 And warm thee with a noble
 name;
 Pour forth the glory of the
 Græme!' —
 Scarce from her lip the word had
 rushed, 110
 When deep the conscious maiden
 blushed;
 For of his clan, in hall and bower,
 Young Malcolm Græme was held
 the flower.

VII

The minstrel waked his harp, —
 three times
 Arose the well-known martial
 chimes,
 And thrice their high heroic pride
 In melancholy murmurs died.
 'Vainly thou bidst, O noble maid,'

Clasping his withered hands, he
 said,
 'Vainly thou bidst me wake the
 strain, 120
 Though all unwont to bid in vain.
 Alas! than mine a mightier hand
 Has tuned my harp, my strings
 has spanned!
 I touch the chords of joy, but low
 And mournful answer notes of
 woe;
 And the proud march which vic-
 tors tread
 Sinks in the wailing for the dead.
 O, well for me, if mine alone
 That dirge's deep prophetic tone!
 If, as my tuneful fathers said, 130
 This harp, which erst Saint Modan
 swayed,
 Can thus its master's fate foretell,
 Then welcome be the minstrel's
 knell!

VIII

'But ah! dear lady, thus it sighed,
 The eve thy sainted mother died;
 And such the sounds which, while
 I strove
 To wake a lay of war or love,
 Came marring all the festal mirth,
 Appalling me who gave them birth.
 And, disobedient to my call, 140
 Wailed loud through Bothwell's
 bannered hall,
 Ere Douglasses, to ruin driven,
 Were exiled from their native
 heaven.—
 O! if yet worse mishap and woe
 My master's house must undergo,
 Or ought but weal to Ellen fair
 Brood in these accents of despair,
 No future bard, sad Harp! shall
 fling
 Triumph or rapture from thy
 string;
 One short, one final strain shall
 flow, 150
 Fraught with unutterable woe,
 Then shivered shall thy fragments
 lie,
 Thy master cast him down and
 die!

IX

Soothing she answered him: 'As-
 suage,
 Mine honored friend, the fears of
 age;
 All melodies to thee are known
 That harp has rung or pipe has
 blown,
 In Lowland vale or Highland glen,
 From Tweed to Spey — what mar-
 vel, then,
 At times unbidden notes should
 rise, 160
 Confusedly bound in memory's
 ties,
 Entangling, as they rush along,
 The war-march with the funeral
 song?—
 Small ground is now for boding
 fear;
 Obscure, but safe, we rest us
 here.
 My sire, in native virtue great,
 Resigning lordship, lands, and
 state,
 Not then to fortune more resigned
 Than yonder oak might give the
 wind;
 The graceful foliage storms may
 reave, 170
 The noble stem they cannot grieve.
 For me'—she stooped, and, look-
 ing round,
 Plucked a blue harebell from the
 ground,—
 'For me, whose memory scarce
 conveys
 An image of more splendid days,
 This little flower that loves the
 lea
 May well my simple emblem be;
 It drinks heaven's dew as blithe
 as rose
 That in the King's own garden
 grows;
 And when I place it in my hair, 180
 Allan, a bard is bound to swear
 He ne'er saw coronet so fair.'
 Then playfully the chaplet wild
 She wreathed in her dark locks,
 and smiled.

X

Her smile, her speech, with winning sway,
 Wiled the old Harper's mood away.
 With such a look as hermits throw,
 When angels stoop to soothe their woe,
 He gazed, till fond regret and pride
 Thrilled to a tear, then thus replied:
 'Loveliest and best! thou little know'st
 The rank, the honors, thou hast lost!
 O, might I live to see thee grace,
 In Scotland's court, thy birthright place,
 To see my favorite's step advance
 The lightest in the courtly dance,
 The cause of every gallant's sigh,
 And leading star of every eye,
 And theme of every minstrel's art,
 The Lady of the Bleeding Heart!'

XI

'Fair dreams are these,' the maiden cried,—
 Light was her accent, yet she sighed,—
 'Yet is this mossy rock to me
 Worth splendid chair and canopy;
 Nor would my footstep spring more gay
 In courtly dance than blithe strathspey,
 Nor half so pleased mine ear incline
 To royal minstrel's lay as thine.
 And then for suitors proud and high,
 To bend before my conquering eye,—
 Thou, flattering bard! thyself wilt say,
 That grim Sir Roderick owns its sway.
 The Saxon scourge, Clan-Alpine's pride,
 The terror of Loch Lomond's side,

Would, at my suit, thou know'st,
 delay
 A Lennox foray — for a day.' —

XII

The ancient bard her glee repressed:
 'Ill hast thou chosen theme for jest!
 For who, through all this western wild,
 Named Black Sir Roderick e'er, and smiled?
 In Holy-Rood a knight he slew;
 I saw, when back the dirk he drew,
 Courtiers give place before the stride
 Of the undaunted homicide;
 And since, though outlawed, hath his hand
 Full sternly kept his mountain land.
 Who else dared give — ah! woe the day,
 That I such hated truth should say! —
 The Douglas, like a stricken deer,
 Disowned by every noble peer,
 Even the rude refuge we have here?
 Alas, this wild marauding Chief
 Alone might hazard our relief,
 And now thy maiden charms expand,
 Looks for his guerdon in thy hand;
 Full soon may dispensation sought,
 To back his suit, from Rome be brought.
 Then, though an exile on the hill,
 Thy father, as the Douglas, still
 Be held in reverence and fear;
 And though to Roderick thou'rt so dear
 That thou mightst guide with silken thread,
 Slave of thy will, this chieftain dread,
 Yet, O loved maid, thy mirth refrain!
 Thy hand is on a lion's mane.' —

XIII

'Minstrel,' the maid replied, and
high

Her father's soul glanced from her
eye,

'My debts to Roderick's house I
know: 248

All that a mother could bestow
To Lady Margaret's care I owe,
Since first an orphan in the wild
She sorrowed o'er her sister's
child;

To her brave chieftain son, from ire
Of Scotland's king who shrouds
my sire,

A deeper, holier debt is owed;
And, could I pay it with my blood,
Allan! Sir Roderick should com-
mand

My blood, my life,—but not my
hand.

Rather will Ellen Douglas dwell
A votaress in Maronnan's cell; 260
Rather through realms beyond the
sea,

Seeking the world's cold charity,
Where ne'er was spoke a Scottish
word,

And ne'er the name of Douglas
heard,

An outcast pilgrim will she rove,
Than wed the man she cannot love.

XIV

'Thou shak'st, good friend, thy
tresses gray,

That pleading look, what can it
say

But what I own?—I grant him
brave,

But wild as Bracklinn's thundering
wave; 270

And generous,—save vindictive
mood

Or jealous transport chafe his
blood:

I grant him true to friendly band,
As his claymore is to his hand;

But O! that very blade of steel
More mercy for a foe would feel:
I grant him liberal, to fling

Among his clan the wealth they
bring,

When back by lake and glen they
wind, 279

And in the Lowland leave behind,
Where once some pleasant hamlet
stood,

A mass of ashes slaked with blood.
The hand that for my father
fought

I honor, as his daughter ought;
But can I clasp it reeking red
From peasants slaughtered in their
shed?

No! wildly while his virtues gleam,
They make his passions darker
seem,

And flash along his spirit high,
Like lightning o'er the midnight
sky. 290

While yet a child,—and children
know,

Instinctive taught, the friend and
foe,—

I shuddered at his brow of gloom,
His shadowy plaid and sable
plume;

A maiden grown, I ill could bear
His haughty mien and lordly air:
But, if thou join'st a suitor's claim,
In serious mood, to Roderick's
name,

I thrill with anguish! or, if e'er
A Douglas knew the word, with
fear. 300

To change such odious theme were
best,—

What think'st thou of our stranger
guest?'—

XV

'What think I of him?—woe the
while

That brought such wanderer to
our isle!

Thy father's battle-brand, of yore
For Tine-man forged by fairy lore,
What time he leagued, no longer
foes,

His Border spears with Hotspur's
bows,

Did, self-unsabarded, foreshow
The footstep of a secret foe. 310
If courtly spy hath harbored here,
What may we for the Douglas
fear?

What for this island, deemed of
old

Clan-Alpine's last and surest hold?
If neither spy nor foe, I pray
What yet may jealous Roderick
say?—

Nay, wave not thy disdainful
head!

Bethink thee of the discord dread
That kindled when at Beltane
game

Thou led'st the dance with Mal-
colm Græme; 320

Still, though thy sire the peace re-
newed,

Smoulders in Roderick's breast
the feud:

Beware!— But hark! what sounds
are these?

My dull ears catch no faltering
breeze,

No weeping birch nor aspens wake,
Nor breath is dimpling in the lake;
Still is the canna's hoary beard,
Yet, by my minstrel faith, I heard—
And hark again! some pipe of war
Sends the bold pibroch from afar.'

XVI

Far up the lengthened lake were
spied 331

Four darkening specks upon the
tide,

That, slow enlarging on the view,
Four manned and masted barges
grew,

And, bearing downwards from
Glengyle,

Steered full upon the lonely isle;
The point of Briancholl they
passed,

And, to the windward as they cast,
Against the sun they gave to shine
The bold Sir Roderick's bannered
Pine. 340

Nearer and nearer as they bear,

Spears, pikes, and axes flash in
air.

Now might you see the tartans
brave,

And plaids and plumage dance and
wave:

Now see the bonnets sink and
rise,

As his tough oar the rower plies;
See, flashing at each sturdy stroke,

The wave ascending into smoke;
See the proud pipers on the bow,

And mark the gaudy streamers
flow 350

From their loud chanters down,
and sweep

The furrowed bosom of the deep,
As, rushing through the lake

amain,

They plied the ancient Highland
strain.

XVII

Ever, as on they bore, more loud
And louder rung the pibroch proud.

At first the sounds, by distance
tame,

Mellowed along the waters came,
And, lingering long by cape and

bay, 359

Wailed every harsher note away,
Then bursting bolder on the ear,

The clan's shrill Gathering they
could hear,

Those thrilling sounds that call
the might

Of old Clan-Alpine to the fight.

Thick beat the rapid notes, as
when

The mustering hundreds shake the
glen,

And hurrying at the signal dread,
The battered earth returns their

tread.

Then prelude light, of livelier tone,
Expressed their merry marching

on, 370

Ere peal of closing battle rose,
With mingled outcry, shrieks, and

blows;

And mimic din of stroke and ward,

As broadsword upon target jarred;
And groaning pause, ere yet again,
Condensed, the battle yelled
amain:

The rapid charge, the rallying
shout,

Retreat borne headlong into rout,
And bursts of triumph, to declare
Clan-Alpine's conquest—all were
there. 380

Nor ended thus the strain, but
slow

Sunk in a moan prolonged and low,
And changed the conquering clar-
ion swell

For wild lament o'er those that
fell.

XVIII

The war-pipes ceased, but lake and
hill

Were busy with their echoes still;
And, when they slept, a vocal
strain

Bade their hoarse chorus wake
again,

While loud a hundred clansmen
raise

Their voices in their Chieftain's
praise. 390

Each boatman, bending to his oar,
With measured sweep the burden
bore,

In such wild cadence as the breeze
Makes through December's leaf-
less trees.

The chorus first could Allan know,
'Roderick Vich Alpine, ho! iroe!'

And near, and nearer as they
rowed,

Distinct the martial ditty flowed.

XIX

BOAT SONG

Hail to the Chief who in triumph
advances!

Honored and blessed be the
ever-green Pine! 400

Long may the tree, in his banner
that glances,

Flourish, the shelter and grace
of our line!

Heaven send it happy dew,

Earth lend it sap anew,

Gayly to burgeon and broadly
to grow,

While every Highland glen

Sends our shout back again,

'Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho!
ieroe!'

Ours is no sapling, chance-sown
by the fountain,

Blooming at Beltane, in winter
to fade; 410

When the whirlwind has stripped
every leaf on the mountain,

The more shall Clan-Alpine ex-
ult in her shade.

Moored in the rifted rock,

Proof to the tempest's shock,

Firmer he roots him the ruder it
blow;

Menteith and Breadalbane,
then,

Echo his praise again,

'Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho!
ieroe!'

XX

Proudly our pibroch has thrilled
in Glen Fruin,

And Bannochar's groans to our
slogan replied; 420

Glen Luss and Ross-dhu, they are
smoking in ruin,

And the best of Loch Lomond
lie dead on her side.

Widow and Saxon maid

Long shall lament our raid,

Think of Clan-Alpine with fear
and with woe;

Lennox and Leven-glen

Shake when they hear again,

'Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho!
ieroe!'

Row, vassals, row, for the pride of
the Highlands!

Stretch to your oars for the ever-
green Pine! 430

O that the rosebud that graces
 yon islands
 Were wreathed in a garland
 around him to twine!
 O that some seedling gem,
 Worthly such noble stem,
 Honored and blessed in their
 shadow might grow!
 Loud should Clan-Alpine then
 Ring from her deepmost glen,
 'Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho!
 ieroe!'

XXI

With all her joyful female band
 Had Lady Margaret sought the
 strand. 440
 Loose on the breeze their tresses
 flew,
 And high their snowy arms they
 threw,
 As echoing back with shrill ac-
 claim,
 And chorus wild, the Chieftain's
 name;
 While, prompt to please, with mo-
 ther's art,
 The darling passion of his heart,
 The Dame called Ellen to the
 strand,
 To greet her kinsman ere he land:
 'Come, loiterer, come! a Douglas
 thou,
 And shun to wreathe a victor's
 brow?' 450
 Reluctantly and slow, the maid
 The unwelcome summoning
 obeyed,
 And when a distant bugle rung,
 In the mid-path aside she
 sprung:—
 'List, Allan-bane! From main-
 land cast
 I hear my father's signal blast.
 Be ours,' she cried, 'the skiff to
 guide,
 And waft him from the mountain-
 side.'
 Then, like a sunbeam, swift and
 bright,
 She darted to her shallop light. 460

And, eagerly while Roderick
 scanned,
 For her dear form, his mother's
 band,
 The islet far behind her lay,
 And she had landed in the bay.

XXII

Some feelings are to mortals given
 With less of earth in them than
 heaven:
 And if there be a human tear
 From passion's dross refined and
 clear,
 A tear so limpid and so meek
 It would not stain an angel's
 cheek, 470
 'T is that which pious fathers
 shed
 Upon a duteous daughter's head!
 And as the Douglas to his breast
 His darling Ellen closely pressed,
 Such holy drops her tresses
 steeped,
 Though 't was an hero's eye that
 weeped.
 Nor while on Ellen's faltering
 tongue
 Her filial welcomes crowded hung,
 Marked she that fear—affection's
 proof— 479
 Still held a graceful youth aloof;
 No! not till Douglas named his
 name,
 Although the youth was Malcolm
 Græme.

XXIII

Allan, with wistful look the while
 Marked Roderick landing on the
 isle;
 His master piteously he eyed,
 Then gazed upon the Chieftain's
 pride,
 Then dashed with hasty hand
 away
 From his dimmed eye the gather-
 ing spray;
 And Douglas, as his hand he laid
 On Malcolm's shoulder, kindly
 said: 490

'Canst thou, young friend, no
 meaning spy
 In my poor follower's glistening
 eye?
 I'll tell thee:— he recalls the day
 When in my praise he led the lay
 O'er the arched gate of Bothwell
 proud,
 While many a minstrel answered
 loud,
 When Percy's Norman pennon,
 won
 In bloody field, before me shone,
 And twice ten knights, the least a
 name 499
 As mighty as yon Chief may claim,
 Gracing my pomp, behind me came,
 Yet trust me, Malcolm, not so
 proud
 Was I of all that marshalled
 crowd,
 Though the waned crescent owned
 my might,
 And in my train trooped lord and
 knight,
 Though Blantyre hymned her holi-
 est lays,
 And Bothwell's bards flung back
 my praise,
 As when this old man's silent tear,
 And this poor maid's affection
 dear,
 A welcome give more kind and
 true 510
 Than aught my better fortunes
 knew.
 Forgive, my friend, a father's
 boast,—
 O, it out-beggars all I lost!'

XXIV

Delightful praise!— like summer
 rose,
 That brighter in the dew-drop
 glows,
 The bashful maiden's cheek ap-
 peared,
 For Douglas spoke, and Malcolm
 heard.
 The flush of shame-faced joy to
 hide,

The hounds, the hawk, her cares
 divide;
 The loved caresses of the maid
 The dogs with crouch and whim-
 per paid; 521
 And, at her whistle, on her hand
 The falcon took his favorite stand,
 Closed his dark wing, relaxed his
 eye,
 Nor, though unhooded, sought to
 fly.
 And, trust, while in such guise she
 stood,
 Like fabled Goddess of the wood,
 That if a father's partial thought
 O'erweighed her worth and beauty
 aught,
 Well might the lover's judgment
 fail 530
 To balance with a juster scale;
 For with each secret glance he
 stole,
 The fond enthusiast sent his soul.

XXV

Of stature fair, and slender frame,
 But firmly knit, was Malcolm
 Græme.
 The belted plaid and tartan hose
 Did ne'er more graceful limbs dis-
 close;
 His flaxen hair, of sunny hue,
 Curled closely round his bonnet
 blue.
 Trained to the chase, his eagle
 eye 540
 The ptarmigan in snow could spy;
 Each pass, by mountain, lake, and
 heath,
 He knew, through Lennox and
 Menteith;
 Vain was the bound of dark-brown
 doe
 When Malcolm bent his sounding
 bow,
 And scarce that doe, though winged
 with fear,
 Outstripped in speed the moun-
 taineer:
 Right up Ben Lomond could he
 press, 548

And not a sob his toil confess.
His form accorded with a mind
Lively and ardent, frank and kind;
A blither heart, till Ellen came,
Did never love nor sorrow tame;
It danced as lightsome in his
breast

As played the feather on his crest.
Yet friends, who nearest knew the
youth,
His scorn of wrong, his zeal for
truth,
And bards, who saw his features
bold
When kindled by the tales of
old,
Said, were that youth to manhood
grown, 560
Not long should Roderick Dhu's
renown
Be foremost voiced by mountain
fame,
But quail to that of Malcolm
Græme.

XXVI

Now back they wend their watery
way,

And, 'O my sire!' did Ellen say,
'Why urge thy chase so far astray?
And why so late returned? And
why?—

The rest was in her speaking eye.
'My child, the chase I follow far,
'T is mimicry of noble war; 570
And with that gallant pastime reft
Were all of Douglas I have left.
I met young Malcolm as I strayed
Fareastward, in Glenfinlas's shade;
Nor strayed I safe, for all around
Hunters and horsemen scoured the
ground.

This youth, though still a royal
ward,
Risked life and land to be my
guard,
And through the passes of the
wood

Guided my steps, not unpursued;
And Roderick shall his welcome
make, 581

Despite old spleen, for Douglas'
sake.
Then must he seek Strath-Endrick
glen,
Nor peril aught for me again.'

XXVII

Sir Roderick, who to meet them
came,
Reddened at sight of Malcolm
Græme,
Yet, not in action, word, or eye,
Failed aught in hospitality.
In talk and sport they whiled
away 589
The morning of that summer day;
But at high noon a courier light
Held secret parley with the knight,
Whose moody aspect soon de-
clared

That evil were the news he heard.
Deep thought seemed toiling in his
head;

Yet was the evening banquet made
Ere he assembled round the flame
His mother, Douglas, and the
Græme,

And Ellen too; then cast around
His eyes, then fixed them on the
ground, 600

As studying phrase that might
avail

Best to convey unpleasant tale.

Long with his dagger's hilt he
played,

Then raised his haughty brow,
and said:—

XXVIII

'Short be my speech;—nor time
affords,

Nor my plain temper, glozing
words.

Kinsman and father,—if such
name

Douglas vouchsafe to Roderick's
claim;

Mine honored mother;—Ellen,—
why,

My cousin, turn away thine
eye?— 610

And Græme, in whom I hope to know
 Full soon a noble friend or foe,
 When age shall give thee thy command,
 And leading in thy native land, —
 List all! — The King's vindictive pride
 Boasts to have tamed the Border-side,
 Where chiefs, with hound and hawk who came
 To share their monarch's sylvan game,
 Themselves in bloody toils were snared,
 And when the banquet they prepared, ⁶²⁰
 And wide their loyal portals flung
 O'er their own gateway struggling hung.
 Loud cries their blood from Meg-gat's mead,
 From Yarrow braes and banks of Tweed,
 Where the lone streams of Ettrick glide,
 And from the silver Teviot's side;
 The dales, where martial clans did ride,
 Are now one sheep-walk, waste and wide.
 This tyrant of the Scottish throne,
 So faithless and so ruthless known, ⁶³⁰
 Now hither comes; his end the same,
 The same pretext of sylvan game.
 What grace for Highland Chiefs, judge ye
 By fate of Border chivalry.
 Yet more; amid Glenfinlas' green,
 Douglas, thy stately form was seen.
 This by espial sure I know:
 Your counsel in the streight I show.'

XXIX

Ellen and Margaret fearfully
 Sought comfort in each other's
 eye, ⁶⁴⁰

Then turned their ghastly look,
 each one,
 This to her sire, that to her son.
 The hasty color went and came
 In the bold cheek of Malcolm Græme,
 But from his glance it well appeared
 'T was but for Ellen that he feared;
 While, sorrowful, but undismayed
 The Douglas thus his counsel said:
 ' Brave Roderick, though the tempest roar,
 It may but thunder and pass o'er; ⁶⁵⁰
 Nor will I here remain an hour,
 To draw the lightning on thy bower;
 For well thou know'st, at this gray head
 The royal bolt were fiercest sped.
 For thee, who, at thy King's command,
 Canst aid him with a gallant band,
 Submission, homage, humbled pride,
 Shall turn the Monarch's wrath aside.
 Poor remnants of the Bleeding Heart,
 Ellen and I will seek apart ⁶⁶⁰
 The refuge of some forest cell,
 There, like the hunted quarry, dwell,
 Till on the mountain and the moor
 The stern pursuit be passed and o'er.' —

XXX

'No, by mine honor,' Roderick said,
 'So help me Heaven, and my good blade!
 No, never! Blasted be yon Pine,
 My father's ancient crest and mine,
 If from its shade in danger part
 The lineage of the Bleeding Heart! ⁶⁷⁰
 Hear my blunt speech: grant me this maid
 To wife, thy counsel to mine aid;

To Douglas, leagued with Roderick Dhu,
 Will friends and allies flock enow;
 Like cause of doubt, distrust, and grief,
 Will bind to us each Western Chief.
 When the loud pipes my bridal tell,
 The Links of Forth shall hear the knell,
 The guards shall start in Stirling's porch;
 And when I light the nuptial torch, 680
 A thousand villages in flames
 Shall scare the slumbers of King James!—
 Nay, Ellen, blench not thus away,
 And, mother, cease these signs, I pray;
 I meant not all my heat might say.—
 Small need of inroad or of fight,
 When the sage Douglas may unite
 Each mountain clan in friendly band,
 To guard the passes of their land,
 Till the foiled King from pathless glen 690
 Shall bootless turn him home again.'

XXXI

There are who have, at midnight hour,
 In slumber scaled a dizzy tower,
 And, on the verge that beetled o'er
 The ocean tide's incessant roar,
 Dreamed calmly out their dangerous dream,
 Till wakened by the morning beam;
 When, dazzled by the eastern glow,
 Such startler cast his glance below,
 And saw unmeasured depth around, 700

And heard unintermitted sound,
 And thought the battled fence so frail,
 It waved like cobweb in the gale;—
 Amid his senses' giddy wheel,
 Did he not desperate impulse feel
 Headlong to plunge himself below,
 And meet the worst his fears fore-show?—
 Thus Ellen, dizzy and astound,
 As sudden ruin yawned around,
 By crossing terrors wildly tossed,
 Still for the Douglas fearing most,
 Could scarce the desperate thought withstand, 712
 To buy his safety with her hand.

XXXII

Such purpose dread could Malcolm spy
 In Ellen's quivering lip and eye,
 And eager rose to speak,—but ere
 His tongue could hurry forth his fear,
 Had Douglas marked the hectic strife,
 Where death seemed combating with life;
 For to her cheek, in feverish flood,
 One instant rushed the throbbing blood, 721
 Then ebbing back, with sudden sway,
 Left its domain as wan as clay.
 'Roderick, enough! enough!' he cried,
 'My daughter cannot be thy bride;
 Not that the blush to wooer dear,
 Nor paleness that of maiden fear.
 It may not be,—forgive her, Chief,
 Nor hazard aught for our relief.
 Against his sovereign, Douglas ne'er 730
 Will level a rebellious spear.
 'T was I that taught his youthful hand
 To rein a steed and wield a brand;
 I see him yet, the princely boy!
 Not Ellen more my pride and joy;

I love him still, despite my wrongs
 By hasty wrath and slanderous
 tongues.
 O, seek the grace you well may
 find,
 Without a cause to mine com-
 bined !'

XXXIII

Twice through the hall the Chief-
 tain strode ; 740
 The waving of his tartans broad,
 And darkened brow, where
 wounded pride
 With ire and disappointment vied,
 Seemed, by the torch's gloomy
 light,
 Like the ill Demon of the night,
 Stooping his pinions' shadowy
 sway
 Upon the nighted pilgrim's way :
 But, unrequited Love ! thy dart
 Plunged deepest its envenomed
 smart,
 And Roderick, with thine anguish
 stung, 750
 At length the hand of Douglas
 wrung,
 While eyes that mocked at tears
 before
 With bitter drops were running
 o'er.
 The death-pangs of long-cherished
 hope
 Scarce in that ample breast had
 scope,
 But, struggling with his spirit
 proud,
 Convulsive heaved its checkered
 shroud,
 While every sob — so mute were
 all —
 Was heard distinctly through the
 hall.
 The son's despair, the mother's
 look, 760
 Ill might the gentle Ellen brook :
 She rose, and to her side there
 came,
 To aid her parting steps, the
 Græme.

XXXIV

Then Roderick from the Douglas
 broke —
 As flashes flame through sable
 smoke,
 Kindling its wreaths, long, dark,
 and low,
 To one broad blaze of ruddy glow,
 So the deep anguish of despair
 Burst, in fierce jealousy, to air.
 With stalwart grasp his hand he
 laid 770
 On Malcolm's breast and belted
 plaid :
 ' Back, beardless boy ! ' he sternly
 said,
 ' Back, minion ! holdst thou thus
 at naught
 The lesson I so lately taught ?
 This roof, the Douglas, and that
 maid,
 Thank thou for punishment de-
 layed.'
 Eager as greyhound on his game,
 Fiercely with Roderick grappled
 Græme.
 ' Perish my name, if aught afford
 Its Chieftain safety save his
 sword ! ' 780
 Thus as they strove their desper-
 ate hand
 Gripped to the dagger or the brand,
 And death had been — but Doug-
 las rose,
 And thrust between the struggling
 foes
 His giant strength : — ' Chieftains,
 forego !
 I hold the first who strikes my
 foe. —
 Madmen, forbear your frantic jar !
 What ! is the Douglas fallen so far,
 His daughter's hand is deemed the
 spoil
 Of such dishonorable broil ? ' 790
 Sullen and slowly they unclasp,
 As struck with shame, their de-
 perate grasp,
 And each upon his rival glared,
 With foot advanced and blade half
 bared.

XXXV

Ere yet the brands aloft were
flung,
Margaret on Roderick's mantle
hung,
And Malcolm heard his Ellen's
scream,
As faltered through terrific dream.
Then Roderick plunged in sheath
his sword,
And veiled his wrath in scornful
word: 800
'Rest safe till morning; pity 't
were
Such cheek should feel the mid-
night air!
Then mayst thou to James Stuart
tell,
Roderick will keep the lake and
fell,
Nor lackey with his freeborn clan
The pageant pomp of earthly man.
More would he of Clan-Alpine
know,
Thou canst our strength and
passes show. —
Malise, what ho!' — his henchman
came:
'Give our safe-conduct to the
Græme.' 810
Young Malcolm answered, calm
and bold:
'Fear nothing for thy favorite
hold;
The spot an angel deigned to
grace
Is blessed, though robbers haunt
the place.
Thy churlish courtesy for those
Reserve, who fear to be thy foes.
As safe to me the mountain way
At midnight as in blaze of day,
Though with his boldest at his
back
Even Roderick Dhu beset the
track. — 820
Brave Douglas, — lovely Ellen, —
nay,
Naught here of parting will I say.
Earth does not hold a lonesome
glen

So secret but we meet again. —
Chieftain! we too shall find an
hour,' —
He said, and left the sylvan bower.

XXXVI

Old Allan followed to the strand —
Such was the Douglas's com-
mand —
And anxious told, how, on the
morn,
The stern Sir Roderick deep had
sworn, 830
The Fiery Cross should circle o'er
Dale, glen, and valley, down and
moor.
Much were the peril to the Græme
From those who to the signal
came;
Far up the lake 't were safest land,
Himself would row him to the
strand.
He gave his counsel to the wind,
While Malcolm did, unheeding,
bind,
Round dirk and pouch and broad-
sword rolled,
His ample plaid in tightened
'fold, 840
And stripped his limbs to such ar-
ray
As best might suit the watery
way, —

XXXVII

Then spoke abrupt: 'Farewell to
thee,
Pattern of old fidelity!' —
The Minstrel's hand he kindly
pressed, —
'O, could I point a place of rest!
My sovereign holds in ward my
land,
My uncle leads my vassal band;
To tame his foes, his friends to
aid,
Poor Malcolm has but heart and
blade. 850
Yet, if there be one faithful Græme
Who loves the chieftain of his
name,

Not long shall honored Douglas dwell
 Like hunted stag in mountain cell;
 Nor, ere yon pride-swollen robber dare, —
 I may not give the rest to air!
 Tell Roderick Dhu I owed him naught,
 Not the poor service of a boat,
 To waft me to yon mountain-side.
 Then plunged he in the flashing tide. 860
 Bold o'er the flood his head he bore,
 And stoutly steered him from the shore;
 And Allan strained his anxious eye,
 Far mid the lake his form to spy,
 Darkening across each puny wave,
 To which the moon her silver gave.
 Fast as the cormorant could skim,
 The swimmer plied each active limb;
 Then landing in the moonlight dell,
 Loud shouted of his weal to tell. 870
 The Minstrel heard the far halloo,
 And joyful from the shore with-drew.

CANTO THIRD

THE GATHERING

I

TIME rolls his ceaseless course.
 The race of yore,
 Who danced our infancy upon
 their knee,
 And told our marvelling boyhood
 legends store
 Of their strange ventures happed
 by land or sea,
 How are they blotted from the
 things that be!

How few, all weak and withered
 of their force,
 Wait on the verge of dark eter-
 nity,
 Like stranded wrecks, the tide
 returning hoarse,
 To sweep them from our sight;
 Time rolls his ceaseless
 course.

Yet live there still who can re-
 member well, 10
 How, when a mountain chief his
 bugle blew,
 Both field and forest, dingle, cliff,
 and dell,
 And solitary heath, the signal
 knew;
 And fast the faithful clan around
 him drew,
 What time the warning note was
 keenly wound,
 What time aloft their kindred ban-
 ner flew,
 While clamorous war-pipes
 yelled the gathering sound,
 And while the Fiery Cross glanced,
 like a meteor, round.

II

The Summer dawn's reflected
 hue
 To purple changed Loch Katrine
 blue; 20
 Mildly and soft the western breeze
 Just kissed the lake, just stirred
 the trees,
 And the pleased lake, like maiden
 coy,
 Trembled but dimpled not for joy:
 The mountain-shadows on her
 breast
 Were neither broken nor at rest;
 In bright uncertainty they lie,
 Like future joys to Fancy's eye.
 The water-lily to the light
 Her chalice reared of silver
 bright; 30
 The doe awoke, and to the lawn,
 Begemmed with dew-drops, led
 her fawn;

The gray mist left the mountain-
side,
The torrent showed its glistening
pride;
Invisible in flecked sky
The lark sent down her revelry;
The blackbird and the speckled
thrush
Good-morrow gave from brake and
bush;
In answer cooed the cushat dove
Her notes of peace and rest and
love. 40

III

No thought of peace, no thought
of rest,
Assuaged the storm in Roderick's
breast.
With sheathed broadsword in his
hand,
Abrupt he paced the islet strand,
And eyed the rising sun, and laid
His hand on his impatient blade.
Beneath a rock, his vassal's care
Was prompt the ritual to prepare,
With deep and deathful meaning
fraught:
For such Antiquity had taught 50
Was preface meet, ere yet abroad
The Cross of Fire should take its
road.
The shrinking band stood oft
aghast
At the impatient glance he cast;—
Such glance the mountain eagle
threw,
As, from the cliffs of Benvenue,
She spread her dark sails on the
wind,
And, high in middle heaven re-
clined,
With her broad shadow on the
lake,
Silenced the warblers of the
brake. 60

IV

A heap of withered boughs was
piled,
Of juniper and rowan wild,

Mingled with shivers from the
oak,
Rent by the lightning's recent
stroke.
Brian the Hermit by it stood,
Barefooted, in his frock and hood.
His grizzled beard and matted
hair
Obscured a visage of despair;
His naked arms and legs, seamed
o'er,
The scars of frantic penance
bore. 70
That monk, of savage form and
face,
The impending danger of his race
Had drawn from deepest solitude,
Far in Benharrow's bosom rude.
Not his the mien of Christian
priest,
But Druid's, from the grave re-
leased,
Whose hardened heart and eye
might brook
On human sacrifice to look;
And much, 't was said, of heathen
lore
Mixed in the charms he muttered
o'er. 80
The hallowed creed gave only
worse
And deadlier emphasis of curse.
No peasant sought that Hermit's
prayer,
His cave the pilgrim shunned with
care;
The eager huntsman knew his
bound,
And in mid chase called off his
hound;
Or if, in lonely glen or strath,
The desert-dweller met his path,
He prayed, and signed the cross
between, 89
While terror took devotion's mien.

V

Of Brian's birth strange tales were
told.
His mother watched a midnight
fold,

Built deep within a dreary glen,
 Where scattered lay the bones of
 men
 In some forgotten battle slain,
 And bleached by drifting wind and
 rain.
 It might have tamed a warrior's
 heart
 To view such mockery of his art !
 The knot-grass fettered there the
 hand
 Which once could burst an iron
 band ; 100
 Beneath the broad and ample
 bone,
 That bucklered heart to fear un-
 known,
 A feeble and a timorous guest,
 The fieldfare framed her lowly
 nest ;
 There the slow blindworm left his
 slime
 On the fleet limbs that mocked at
 time ;
 And there, too, lay the leader's
 skull,
 Still wreathed with chaplet, flushed
 and full,
 For heath-bell with her purple
 bloom
 Supplied the bonnet and the
 plume. 110
 All night, in this sad glen, the
 maid
 Sat shrouded in her mantle's
 shade :
 She said no shepherd sought her
 side,
 No hunter's hand her snood un-
 tied,
 Yet ne'er again to braid her hair
 The virgin snood did Alice wear ;
 Gone was her maiden glee and
 sport,
 Her maiden girdle all too short,
 Nor sought she, from that fatal
 night,
 Or holy church or blessed rite, 120
 But locked her secret in her
 breast,
 And died in travail, unconfessed.

VI

Alone, among his young compeers,
 Was Brian from his infant years ;
 A moody and heart-broken boy,
 Estranged from sympathy and joy,
 Bearing each taunt which careless
 tongue
 On his mysterious lineage flung.
 Whole nights he spent by moon-
 light pale,
 To wood and stream his hap to
 wail, 130
 Till, frantic, he as truth received
 What of his birth the crowd be-
 lieved,
 And sought, in mist and meteor
 fire,
 To meet and know his Phantom
 Sire !
 In vain, to soothe his wayward
 fate,
 The cloister oped her pitying gate ;
 In vain the learning of the age
 Unclasped the sable-lettered page ;
 Even in its treasures he could find
 Food for the fever of his mind. 140
 Eager he read whatever tells
 Of magic, cabala, and spells,
 And every dark pursuit allied
 To curious and presumptuous
 pride ;
 Till with fired brain and nerves
 o'erstrung,
 And heart with mystic horrors
 wrung,
 Desperate he sought Benharrow's
 den,
 And hid him from the haunts of
 men.

VII

The desert gave him visions wild,
 Such as might suit the spectre's
 child. 150
 Where with black cliffs the tor-
 rents toil,
 He watched the wheeling eddies
 boil,
 Till from their foam his dazzled
 eyes
 Beheld the River Demon rise :

The mountain mist took form and limb
 Of noontide hag or goblin grim;
 The midnight wind came wild and dread,
 Swelled with the voices of the dead;
 Far on the future battle-heath ¹⁵⁹
 His eye beheld the ranks of death;
 Thus the lone Seer, from mankind hurled,
 Shaped forth a disembodied world.
 One lingering sympathy of mind
 Still bound him to the mortal kind;
 The only parent he could claim
 Of ancient Alpine's lineage came.
 Late had he heard, in prophet's dream,
 The fatal Ben-Shie's boding scream;
 Sounds, too, had come in midnight blast ¹⁶⁹
 Of charging steeds, careering fast
 Along Benharrow's shingly side,
 Where mortal horseman ne'er might ride;
 The thunderbolt had split the pine, —
 All augured ill to Alpine's line.
 He girt his loins, and came to show
 The signals of impending woe,
 And now stood prompt to bless or ban,
 As bade the Chieftain of his clan.

VIII

'T was all prepared; — and from the rock ¹⁷⁹
 A goat, the patriarch of the flock,
 Before the kindling pile was laid,
 And pierced by Roderick's ready blade.
 Patient the sickening victim eyed
 The life-blood ebb in crimson tide
 Down his clogged beard and shaggy limb,
 Till darkness glazed his eyeballs dim.
 The grisly priest, with murmuring prayer,

A slender crosslet framed with care,
 A cubit's length in measure due;
 The shaft and limbs were rods of yew, ¹⁹⁰
 Whose parents in Inch Cailliach wave
 Their shadows o'er Clan-Alpine's grave,
 And, answering Lomond's breezes deep,
 Soothe many a chieftain's endless sleep.
 The Cross thus formed he held on high,
 With wasted hand and haggard eye,
 And strange and mingled feelings woke,
 While his anathema he spoke: —

IX

'Woe to the clansman who shall view
 This symbol of sepulchral yew, ²⁰⁰
 Forgetful that its branches grew
 Where weep the heavens their holiest dew
 On Alpine's dwelling low!
 Deserter of his Chieftain's trust,
 He ne'er shall mingle with their dust,
 But, from his sires and kindred thrust,
 Each clansman's execration just
 Shall doom him wrath and woe.'
 He paused; — the word the vassals took,
 With forward step and fiery look,
 On high their naked brands they shook, ²¹¹
 Their clattering targets wildly strook;
 And first in murmur low,
 Then, like the billow in his course,
 That far to seaward finds his source,
 And flings to shore his mustered force,
 Burst with loud roar their answer hoarse,

'Woe to the traitor, woe!'
 Ben-an's gray scalp the accents
 knew,
 The joyous wolf from covert drew,
 The exulting eagle screamed
 afar, — 221
 They knew the voice of Alpine's
 war.

X

The shout was hushed on lake and
 fell,
 The Monk resumed his muttered
 spell:
 Dismal and low its accents came,
 The while he scathed the Cross
 with flame;
 And the few words that reached
 the air,
 Although the holiest name was
 there,
 Had more of blasphemy than
 prayer.
 But when he shook above the
 crowd 230
 Its kindled points, he spoke
 aloud:—
 'Woe to the wretch who fails to
 rear
 At this dread sign the ready spear!
 For, as the flames this symbol sear,
 His home, the refuge of his fear,
 A kindred fate shall know;
 Far o'er its roof the volumed flame
 Clan-Alpine's vengeance shall pro-
 claim,
 While maids and matrons on his
 name
 Shall call down wretchedness and
 shame, 240
 And infamy and woe.'
 Then rose the cry of females, shrill
 As goshawk's whistle on the hill,
 Denouncing misery and ill,
 Mingled with childhood's babbling
 trill
 Of curses stammered slow;
 Answering with imprecation
 dread,
 'Sunk be his home in embers red!
 And cursed be the meanest shed

That e'er shall hide the houseless
 head 250
 We doom to want and woe!'
 A sharp and shrieking echo gave,
 Coir-Uriskin, thy goblin cave!
 And the gray pass where birches
 wave
 On Beala-nam-bo.

XI

Then deeper paused the priest
 anew,
 And hard his laboring breath he
 drew,
 While, with set teeth and clenched
 hand,
 And eyes that glowed like fiery
 brand,
 He meditated curse more dread,
 And deadlier, on the clansman's
 head 261
 Who, summoned to his chieftain's
 aid,
 The signal saw and disobeyed.
 The crosslet's points of sparkling
 wood
 He quenched among the bubbling
 blood,
 And, as again the sign he reared,
 Hollow and hoarse his voice was
 heard:
 'When flits this Cross from man
 to man,
 Vich-Alpine's summons to his clan,
 Burst be the ear that fails to heed!
 Palsied the foot that shuns to
 speed! 271
 May ravens tear the careless eyes,
 Wolves make the coward heart
 their prize!
 As sinks that blood-stream in the
 earth,
 So may his heart's-blood drench
 his hearth!
 As dies in hissing gore the spark,
 Quench thou his light, Destruction
 dark!
 And be the grace to him denied,
 Bought by this sign to all beside!'
 He ceased; no echo gave again 280
 The murmur of the deep Amen.

XII

Then Roderick with impatient
look
From Brian's hand the symbol
took:
'Speed, Malise, speed!' he said,
and gave
The crosslet to his henchman
brave.
'The muster-place be Lanrick
mead —
Instant the time — speed, Malise,
speed!'
Like heath-bird, when the hawks
pursue,
A barge across Loch Katrine flew:
High stood the henchman on the
prow; 290
So rapidly the barge-men row,
The bubbles, where they launched
the boat,
Were all unbroken and afloat,
Dancing in foam and ripple still,
When it had neared the mainland
hill;
And from the silver beach's side
Still was the prow three fathom
wide,
When lightly bounded to the land
The messenger of blood and brand.

XIII

Speed, Malise, speed! the dun
deer's hide 300
On fleeter foot was never tied.
Speed, Malise, speed! such cause
of haste
Thine active sinews never braced.
Bend 'gainst the steepy hill thy
breast,
Burst down like torrent from its
crest;
With short and springing footstep
pass
The trembling bog and false mo-
rass;
Across the brook like roebuck
bound,
And thread the brake like quest-
ing hound; 309
The crag is high, the scaur is deep,

Yet shrink not from the desperate
leap:
Parched are thy burning lips and
brow,
Yet by the fountain pause not now;
Herald of battle, fate, and fear,
Stretch onward in thy fleet career!
The wounded hind thou track'st
not now,
Pursuest not maid through green-
wood bough,
Nor pliest thou now thy flying
pace
With rivals in the mountain race;
But danger, death, and warrior
deed 320
Are in thy course — speed, Malise,
speed!

XIV

Fast as the fatal symbol flies,
In arms the huts and hamlets rise;
From winding glen, from upland
brown,
They poured each hardy tenant
down.
Nor slacked the messenger his
pace:
He showed the sign, he named the
place,
And, pressing forward like the
wind,
Left clamor and surprise behind.
The fisherman forsook the strand,
The swarthy smith took dirk and
brand; 331
With changed cheer, the mower
blithe
Left in the half-cut swath his
scythe;
The herds without a keeper
strayed,
The plough was in mid-furrow
stayed,
The falconer tossed his hawk
away,
The hunter left the stag at bay;
Prompt at the signal of alarms,
Each son of Alpine rushed to arms;
So swept the tumult and affray 340
Along the margin of Achray.

Alas, thou lovely lake ! that e'er
 Thy banks should echo sounds of
 fear !
 The rocks, the bosky thickets,
 sleep
 So stilly on thy bosom deep,
 The lark's blithe carol from the
 cloud
 Seems for the scene too gayly
 loud.

XV

Speed, Malise, speed ! The lake
 is past,
 Duncraggan's huts appear at last,
 And peep, like moss-grown rocks,
 half seen, 350
 Half hidden in the copse so green ;
 There mayst thou rest, thy labor
 done,
 Their lord shall speed the signal
 on. —
 As stoops the hawk upon his prey,
 The henchman shot him down the
 way.

What woful accents load the gale ?
 The funeral yell, the female wail !
 A gallant hunter's sport is o'er,
 A valiant warrior fights no more.
 Who, in the battle or the chase,
 At Roderick's side shall fill his
 place ! — 361

Within the hall, where torch's ray
 Supplies the excluded beams of
 day,
 Lies Duncan on his lowly bier,
 And o'er him streams his widow's
 tear.
 His stripling son stands mournful
 by,
 His youngest weeps, but knows
 not why ;
 The village maids and matrons
 round
 The dismal coronach resound.

XVI

CORONACH

He is gone on the mountain, 370
 He is lost to the forest,

Like a summer-dried fountain,
 When our need was the sorest.
 The font, reappearing,
 From the rain-drops shall bor-
 row,
 But to us comes no cheering,
 To Duncan no morrow !

The hand of the reaper
 Takes the ears that are hoary,
 But the voice of the weeper 380
 Wails manhood in glory.
 The autumn winds rushing
 Waft the leaves that are searest,
 But our flower was in flushing,
 When blighting was nearest.

Fleet foot on the correi,
 Sage counsel in cumber,
 Red hand in the foray,
 How sound is thy slumber !
 Like the dew on the mountain, 390
 Like the foam on the river,
 Like the bubble on the fountain,
 Thou art gone, and forever !

XVII

See Stumah, who, the bier beside,
 His master's corpse with wonder
 eyed,
 Poor Stumah ! whom his least
 halloo
 Could send like lightning o'er the
 dew,
 Bristles his crest, and points his
 ears,
 As if some stranger step he hears,
 'T is not a mourner's muffled tread,
 Who comes to sorrow o'er the
 dead, 401
 But headlong haste or deadly fear
 Urge the precipitate career.
 All stand aghast : — unheeding all,
 The henchman bursts into the hall ;
 Before the dead man's bier he stood
 Held forth the Cross besmeared
 with blood ;
 ' The muster-place is Lanrick
 mead ;
 Speed forth the signal ! clansmen,
 speed !'

XVIII

Angus, the heir of Duncan's line,
Sprung forth and seized the fatal
sign. 411

In haste the stripling to his side
His father's dirk and broadsword
tied;

But when he saw his mother's
eye

Watch him in speechless agony,
Back to her opened arms he flew,
Pressed on her lips a fond adieu, —
'Alas!' she sobbed, — 'and yet be
gone,

And speed thee forth, like Dun-
can's son!' 419

One look he cast upon the bier,
Dashed from his eye the gathering
tear,

Breathed deep to clear his labor-
ing breast,

And tossed aloft his bonnet crest,
Then, like the high-bred colt when,
freed,

First he essays his fire and speed,
He vanished, and o'er moor and
moss

Sped forward with the Fiery Cross.
Suspended was the widow's tear
While yet his footsteps she could
hear;

And when she marked the hench-
man's eye 430

Wet with unwonted sympathy,
'Kinsman,' she said, 'his race is
run

That should have sped thine er-
rand on;

The oak has fallen, — the sapling
bough

Is all Duncraggan's shelter now.
Yet trust I well, his duty done,
The orphan's God will guard my
son. —

And you in many a danger true,
At Duncan's best your blades that
drew,

To arms, and guard that orphan's
head! 440

Let babes and women wail the
dead.'

Then weapon-clang and martial
call

Resounded through the funeral
hall,

While from the walls the attend-
ant band

Snatched sword and targe with
hurried hand;

And short and flitting energy
Glanced from the mourner's sunk-
en eye,

As if the sounds to warrior dear
Might rouse her Duncan from his
bier.

But faded soon that borrowed
force; 450

Grief claimed his right, and tears
their course.

XIX

Benledi saw the Cross of Fire,
It glanced like lightning up Strath-
Ire.

O'er dale and hill the summons
flew,

Nor rest nor pause young Angus
knew;

The tear that gathered in his
eye

He left the mountain-breeze to
dry;

Until, where Teith's young waters
roll

Betwixt him and a wooded knoll
That graced the sable strath with
green, 460

The chapel of Saint Bride was
seen.

Swoln was the stream, remote the
bridge,

But Angus paused not on the
edge;

Though the dark waves danced
dizzily,

Though reeled his sympathetic
eye,

He dashed amid the torrent's roar:
His right hand high the crosslet
bore,

His left the pole-axe grasped, to
guide

And stay his footing in the tide.
 He stumbled twice, — the foam
 splashed high, 470
 With hoarser swell the stream
 raced by;
 And had he fallen, — forever
 there,
 Farewell Duncraggan's orphan
 heir!
 But still, as if in parting life,
 Firmer he grasped the Cross of
 strife,
 Until the opposing bank he gained,
 And up the chapel pathway
 strained.

XX

A blithesome rout that morning-
 tide
 Had sought the chapel of Saint
 Bride. 479
 Her troth Tombea's Mary gave
 To Norman, heir of Armandave,
 And, issuing from the Gothic arch,
 The bridal now resumed their
 march.
 In rude but glad procession came
 Bonneted sire and coif-clad dame;
 And plaided youth, with jest and
 jeer,
 Which snooded maiden would not
 hear;
 And children, that, unwitting why,
 Lent the gay shout their shrilly
 cry;
 And minstrels, that in measures
 vied 490
 Before the young and bonny bride,
 Whose downcast eye and cheek
 disclose
 The tear and blush of morning
 rose.
 With virgin step and bashful hand
 She held the kerchief's snowy
 band,
 The gallant bridegroom by her side
 Beheld his prize with victor's
 pride,
 And the glad mother in her ear
 Was closely whispering word of
 cheer.

XXI

Who meets them at the church-
 yard gate? 500
 The messenger of fear and fate!
 Haste in his hurried accent lies,
 And grief is swimming in his eyes,
 All dripping from the recent flood.
 Panting and travel-soiled he stood,
 The fatal sign of fire and sword
 Held forth, and spoke the ap-
 pointed word:
 'The muster-place is Lanrick
 mead;
 Speed forth the signal! Norman,
 speed!'
 And must he change so soon the
 hand 510
 Just linked to his by holy band,
 For the fell Cross of blood and
 brand?
 And must the day so blithe that
 rose,
 And promised rapture in the close,
 Before its setting hour, divide
 The bridegroom from the plighted
 bride?
 O fatal doom! — it must! it must!
 Clan-Alpine's cause, her Chief-
 tain's trust,
 Her summons dread, brook no de-
 lay; 519
 Stretch to the race, — away! away!

XXII

Yet slow he laid his plaid aside,
 And lingering eyed his lovely
 bride,
 Until he saw the starting tear
 Speak woe he might not stop to
 cheer;
 Then, trusting not a second look,
 In haste he sped him up the brook,
 Nor backward glanced till on the
 heath
 Where Lubnaig's lake supplies the
 Teith. —
 What in the racer's bosom stirred?
 The sickening pang of hope de-
 ferred, 530
 And memory with a torturing
 train

Of all his morning visions vain.
 Mingled with love's impatience,
 came
 The manly thirst for martial fame;
 The stormy joy of mountaineers
 Ere yet they rush upon the spears;
 And zeal for Clan and Chieftain
 burning,
 And hope, from well-fought field
 returning,
 With war's red honors on his
 crest, 539
 To clasp his Mary to his breast.
 Stung by such thoughts, o'er bank
 and brae,
 Like fire from flint he glanced
 away,
 While high resolve and feeling
 strong
 Burst into voluntary song.

XXIII

SONG

The heath this night must be my
 bed,
 The bracken curtain for my head,
 My lullaby the warder's tread,
 Far, far, from love and thee,
 Mary;
 To-morrow eve, more stilly laid,
 My couch may be my bloody plaid,
 My vesper song thy wail, sweet
 maid! 551
 It will not waken me, Mary!

I may not, dare not, fancy now
 The grief that clouds thy lovely
 brow,
 I dare not think upon thy vow,
 And all it promised me, Mary.
 No fond regret must Norman
 know;
 When bursts Clan-Alpine on the
 foe,
 His heart must be like bended
 bow, 559
 His foot like arrow free, Mary.
 A time will come with feeling
 fraught,

For, if I fall in battle fought,
 Thy hapless lover's dying thought
 Shall be a thought on thee,
 Mary.
 And if returned from conquered
 foes,
 How blithely will the evening
 close,
 How sweet the linnet sing repose,
 To my young bride and me,
 Mary!

XXIV

Not faster o'er thy heathery braes,
 Balquidder, speeds the midnight
 blaze, 570
 Rushing in conflagration strong
 Thy deep ravines and dells along,
 Wrapping thy cliffs in purple glow,
 And reddening the dark lakes be-
 low;
 Nor faster speeds it, nor so far,
 As o'er thy heaths the voice of
 war.
 The signal roused to martial coil
 The sullen margin of Loch Voil,
 Waked still Loch Doine, and to
 the source
 Alarmed, Balvaig, thy swampy
 course; 580
 Thence southward turned its rapid
 road
 Adown Strath-Gartney's valley
 broad,
 Till rose in arms each man might
 claim
 A portion in Clan-Alpine's name,
 From the gray sire, whose trem-
 bling hand
 Could hardly buckle on his brand,
 To the raw boy, whose shaft and
 bow
 Were yet scarce terror to the crow.
 Each valley, each sequestered
 glen,
 Mustered its little horde of men, 590
 That met as torrents from the
 height
 In highland dales their streams
 unite,
 Still gathering, as they pour along,

A voice more loud, a tide more strong,
 Till at the rendezvous they stood
 By hundreds prompt for blows
 and blood,
 Each trained to arms since life began,
 Owning no tie but to his clan,
 No oath but by his chieftain's
 hand,
 No law but Roderick Dhu's command.

600

XXV

That summer morn had Roderick
 Dhu
 Surveyed the skirts of Benvenue,
 And sent his scouts o'er hill and
 heath,
 To view the frontiers of Menteith.
 All backward came with news of
 truce;
 Still lay each martial Græme and
 Bruce,
 In Rednock courts no horsemen
 wait,
 No banner waved on Cardross
 gate,
 On Duchray's towers no beacon
 shone,
 Nor scared the herons from Loch
 Con;
 All seemed at peace.—Now wot
 ye why
 The Chieftain with such anxious
 eye,
 Ere to the muster he repair,
 This western frontier scanned
 with care?—
 In Benvenue's most darksome
 cleft,
 A fair though cruel pledge was
 left;
 For Douglas, to his promise true,
 That morning from the isle with-
 drew,
 And in a deep sequestered dell
 Had sought a low and lonely
 cell.
 By many a bard in Celtic tongue
 Has Coir-nan-Uriskin been sung;

620

A softer name the Saxons gave,
 And called the grot the Goblin
 Cave.

XXVI

It was a wild and strange retreat,
 As e'er was trod by outlaw's feet.
 The dell, upon the mountain's
 crest,
 Yawned like a gash on warrior's
 breast;
 Its trench had stayed full many a
 rock,
 Hurl'd by primeval earthquake
 shock
 From Benvenue's gray summit
 wild,
 And here, in random ruin piled,
 They frowned incumbent o'er the
 spot,
 And formed the rugged sylvan
 grot.
 The oak and birch with mingled
 shade
 At noontide there a twilight made,
 Unless when short and sudden
 shone
 Some straggling beam on cliff or
 stone,
 With such a glimpse as prophet's
 eye
 Gains on thy depth, Futurity.
 No murmur waked the solemn
 still,
 Save tinkling of a fountain rill;
 But when the wind chafed with
 the lake,
 A sullen sound would upward
 break,
 With dashing hollow voice, that
 spoke
 The incessant war of wave and
 rock.
 Suspended cliffs with hideous sway
 Seemed nodding o'er the cavern
 gray.
 From such a den the wolf had
 sprung,
 In such the wild-cat leaves her
 young;
 Yet Douglas and his daughter fair

630

640

650

Sought for a space their safety
there.

Gray Superstition's whisper dread
Debarred the spot to vulgar tread ;
For there, she said, did fays re-
sort,

And satyrs hold their sylvan court,
By moonlight tread their mystic
maze,
And blast the rash beholder's gaze.

XXVII

Now eve, with western shadows
long,

Floated on Katrine bright and
strong, 660

When Roderick with a chosen few
Repassed the heights of Benvenue.
Above the Goblin Cave they go,
Through the wild pass of Beal-
nam-bo ;

The prompt retainers speed be-
fore,

To launch the shallop from the
shore,

For 'cross Loch Katrine lies his
way

To view the passes of Achray,
And place his clansmen in array.
Yet lags the Chief in musing
mind, 670

Unwonted sight, his men behind.
A single page, to bear his sword,
Alone attended on his lord ;
The rest their way through thick-
ets break,

And soon await him by the lake.
It was a fair and gallant sight,
To view them from the neighbor-
ing height,

By the low-levelled sunbeam's
light !

For strength and stature, from the
clan 679

Each warrior was a chosen man,
As even afar might well be seen,
By their proud step and martial
mien.

Their feathers dance, their tartans
float,

Their targets gleam, as by the boat

A wild and warlike group they
stand,
That well became such mountain-
strand.

XXVIII

Their Chief with step reluctant still
Was lingering on the craggy hill,
Hard by where turned apart the
road

To Douglas's obscure abode, 690
It was but with that dawning
morn

That Roderick Dhu had proudly
sworn

To drown his love in war's wild
roar,

Nor think of Ellen Douglas more ;
But he who stems a stream with
sand,

And fetters flame with flaxen band,
Has yet a harder task to prove, —
By firm resolve to conquer love !
Eve finds the Chief, like restless
ghost,

Still hovering near his treasure
lost ; 700

For though his haughty heart deny
A parting meeting to his eye,
Still fondly strains his anxious ear
The accents of her voice to hear,
And inly did he curse the breeze
That waked to sound the rustling
trees.

But hark ! what mingles in the
strain ?

It is the harp of Allan-bane,
That wakes its measure slow and
high,

Attuned to sacred minstrelsy. 710
What melting voice attends the
strings ?

'T is Ellen, or an angel, sings.

XXIX

HYMN TO THE VIRGIN

Ave Maria ! maiden mild !

Listen to a maiden's prayer !

Thou canst hear though from the
wild,

Thou canst save amid despair.
Safe may we sleep beneath thy
care,

Though banished, outcast, and
reviled —

Maiden! hear a maiden's prayer;
Mother, hear a suppliant child!

Ave Maria!

Ave Maria! undefiled! 721

The flinty couch we now must
share

Shall seem with down of eider
piled,

If thy protection hover there.

The murky cavern's heavy air

Shall breathe of balm if thou
hast smiled;

Then, Maiden! hear a maiden's
prayer,

Mother, list a suppliant child!

Ave Maria!

Ave Maria! stainless styled!

Foul demons of the earth and
air, 730

From this their wonted haunt
exiled,

Shall flee before thy presence
fair.

We bow us to our lot of care,

Beneath thy guidance recon-
ciled:

Hear for a maid a maiden's prayer,
And for a father hear a child!

Ave Maria!

XXX

Died on the harp the closing
hymn, —

Unmoved in attitude and limb,

As listening still, Clan-Alpine's
lord 739

Stood leaning on his heavy sword,
Until the page with humble sign

Twice pointed to the sun's decline.
Then while his plaid he round him

cast,

'It is the last time — 't is the last,'
He muttered thrice, — 'the last
time e'er

That angel-voice shall Roderick
hear!'

It was a goading thought, — his
stride

Hied hastier down the mountain-
side;

Sullen he flung him in the boat,

An instant 'cross the lake it shot.

They landed in that silvery bay,

And eastward held their hasty
way, 752

Till, with the latest beams of light,
The band arrived on Laurick
height,

Where mustered in the vale be-
low

Clan-Alpine's men in martial show.

XXXI

A various scene the clansmen
made:

Some sat, some stood, some slowly
strayed;

But most, with mantles folded
round,

Were couched to rest upon the
ground, 760

Scarce to be known by curious
eye

From the deep heather where they
lie,

So well was matched the tartan
screen

With heath-bell dark and brackens
green;

Unless where, here and there, a
blade

Or lance's point a glimmer made,
Like glow-worm twinkling through
the shade.

But when, advancing through the
gloom,

They saw the Chieftain's eagle
plume,

Their shout of welcome, shrill and
wide, 770

Shook the steep mountain's steady
side.

Thrice it arose, and lake and fell
Three times returned the martial
yell;

It died upon Bochastle's plain,
And Silence claimed her evening
reign.

CANTO FOURTH

THE PROPHECY

I

'THE rose is fairest when 't is
budding new,
And hope is brightest when it
dawns from fears ;
The rose is sweetest washed with
morning dew,
And love is loveliest when em-
balm'd in tears.
O wilding rose, whom fancy thus
endears,
I bid your blossoms in my bon-
net wave,
Emblem of hope and love through
future years !'
Thus spoke young Norman, heir
of Armandave,
What time the sun arose on Ven-
nachar's broad wave.

II

Such fond conceit, half said, half
sung, ¹⁰
Love prompted to the bridegroom's
tongue.
All while he stripped the wild-rose
spray,
His axe and bow beside him lay,
For on a pass 'twixt lake and
wood
A wakeful sentinel he stood.
Hark!—on the rock a footstep
rung,
And instant to his arms he sprung.
'Stand, or thou diest!—What,
Malise?—soon
Art thou returned from Braes of
Doune.
By thy keen step and glance I
know, ²⁰
Thou bring'st us tidings of the
foe.'—
For while the Fiery Cross hied on,
On distant scout had Malise
gone.—
'Where sleeps the Chief?' the
henchman said.

'Apart, in yonder misty glade ;
To his lone couch I 'll be your
guide.'—
Then called a slumberer by his
side,
And stirred him with his slackened
bow,—
'Up, up, Glentarkin! rouse thee,
ho!
We seek the Chieftain; on the
track ³⁰
Keep eagle watch till I come
back.'

III

Together up the pass they sped :
'What of the foeman?' Norman
said.—
'Varying reports from near and
far;
This certain,—that a band of
war
Has for two days been ready
boune,
At prompt command to march
from Doune ;
King James the while, with
princely powers,
Holds revelry in Stirling towers.
Soon will this dark and gathering
cloud ⁴⁰
Speak on our glens in thunder
loud.
Inured to bide such bitter bout,
The warrior's plaid may bear it
out;
But, Norman, how wilt thou pro-
vide
A shelter for thy bonny bride?'—
'What! know ye not that Roder-
ick's care
To the lone isle hath caused re-
pair
Each maid and matron of the clan,
And every child and aged man
Unfit for arms; and given his
charge, ⁵⁰
Nor skiff nor shallop, boat nor
barge,
Upon these lakes shall float at
large,

But all beside the islet moor,
That such dear pledge may rest
secure?' —

IV

'T is well advised, — the Chief-
tain's plan
Bespeaks the father of his clan.
But wherefore sleeps Sir Rod-
erick Dhu
Apart from all his followers true?'
'It is because last evening-tide
Brian an augury hath tried, 60
Of that dread kind which must not
be
Unless in dread extremity,
The Taghairm called; by which,
afar,
Our sires foresaw the events of
war.
Duncraggan's milk-white bull they
slew.' —

MALISE

'Ah! well the gallant brute I
knew!
The choicest of the prey we had
When swept our merry-men Gal-
langad.
His hide was snow, his horns were
dark,
His red eye glowed like fiery
spark; 70
So fierce, so tameless, and so fleet,
Sore did he cumber our retreat,
And kept our stoutest kerns in
awe,
Even at the pass of Beal 'maha.
But steep and flinty was the road,
And sharp the hurrying pikeman's
goad,
And when we came to Dennan's
Row
A child might scathless stroke his
brow.'

V

NORMAN

'That bull was slain; his reeking
hide

They stretched the cataract be-
side, 80
Whose waters their wild tumult
toss
Adown the black and craggy
boss
Of that huge cliff whose ample
verge
Tradition calls the Hero's Targe.
Couched on a shelf beneath its
brink,
Close where the thundering tor-
rents sink,
Rocking beneath their headlong
sway,
And drizzled by the ceaseless
spray,
Midst groan of rock and roar of
stream, 89
The wizard waits prophetic dream.
Nor distant rests the Chief; — but
hush!
See, gliding slow through mist and
bush,
The hermit gains yon rock, and
stands
To gaze upon our slumbering
bands.
Seems he not, Malise, like a
ghost,
That hovers o'er a slaughtered
host?
Or raven on the blasted oak,
That, watching while the deer is
broke,
His morsel claims with sullen
croak?'

MALISE

'Peace! peace! to other than to
me 100
Thy words were evil augury;
But still I hold Sir Roderick's
blade
Clan-Alpine's omen and her aid,
Not aught that, gleaned from hea-
ven or hell,
Yon fiend-begotten Monk can tell.
The Chieftain joins him, see — and
now
Together they descend the brow.'

VI

And, as they came, with Alpine's
 Lord
 The Hermit Monk held solemn
 word:—¹⁰⁹
 'Roderick! it is a fearful strife,
 For man endowed with mortal
 life,
 Whose shroud of sentient clay can
 still
 Feel feverish pang and fainting
 chill,
 Whose eye can stare in stony
 trance,
 Whose hair can rouse like war-
 rior's lance,—
 'T is hard for such to view, un-
 furled,
 The curtain of the future world.
 Yet, witness every quaking limb,
 My sunken pulse, mine eyeballs
 dim,
 My soul with harrowing anguish
 torn,¹²⁰
 This for my Chieftain have I
 borne!—
 The shapes that sought my fearful
 couch
 A human tongue may ne'er
 avouch;
 No mortal man—save he, who,
 bred
 Between the living and the dead,
 Is gifted beyond nature's law—
 Had e'er survived to say he
 saw.
 At length the fateful answer came
 In characters of living flame!
 Not spoke in word, nor blazed in
 scroll,¹³⁰
 But borne and branded on my
 soul:—
 WHICH SPILLS THE FOREMOST
 FOEMAN'S LIFE,
 THAT PARTY CONQUERS IN THE
 STRIFE.'

VII

'Thanks, Brian, for thy zeal and
 care!
 Good is thine augury, and fair.

Clan-Alpine ne'er in battle stood
 But first our broadswords tasted
 blood.
 A surer victim still I know,
 Self-offered to the auspicious blow:
 A spy has sought my land this
 morn,¹⁴⁰
 No eve shall witness his return!
 My followers guard each pass's
 mouth,
 To east, to westward, and to
 south;
 Red Murdoch, bribed to be his
 guide,
 Has charge to lead his steps aside,
 Till in deep path or dingle brown
 He light on those shall bring him
 down.—
 But see, who comes his news to
 show!
 Malise! what tidings of the foe?'

VIII

'At Doune, o'er many a spear and
 glaive¹⁵⁰
 Two Barons proud their banners
 wave.
 I saw the Moray's silver star,
 And marked the sable pale of
 Mar.'
 'By Alpine's soul, high tidings
 those!
 I love to hear of worthy foes.
 When move they on?' 'To-mor-
 row's noon
 Will see them here for battle
 boune.'
 'Then shall it see a meeting stern!
 But, for the place,—say, couldst
 thou learn
 Nought of the friendly clans of
 Earn?¹⁶⁰
 Strengthened by them, we well
 might bide
 The battle on Benledi's side.
 Thou couldst not?—well! Clan-
 Alpine's men
 Shall man the Trosachs' shaggy
 glen;
 Within Loch Katrine's gorge we'll
 fight,

All in our maids' and matrons'
sight,
Each for his hearth and household
fire,
Father for child, and son for sire,
Lover for maid beloved! — But
why —

Is it the breeze affects mine eye?
Or dost thou come, ill-omened tear!
A messenger of doubt or fear? 172
No! sooner may the Saxon lance
Unfix Benledi from his stance,
Than doubt or terror can pierce
through

The unyielding heart of Roderick
Dhu!

'T is stubborn as his trusty targe.
Each to his post! — all know their
charge.'

The pibroch sounds, the bands ad-
vance,

The broadswords gleam, the ban-
ners dance, 180

Obedient to the Chieftains'
glance. —

I turn me from the martial roar,
And seek Coir-Uriskin once more.

IX

Where is the Douglas? — he is
gone;

And Ellen sits on the gray stone
Fast by the cave, and makes her
moan,

While vainly Allan's words of
cheer

Are poured on her unheeding ear.
'He will — return — dear lady,
trust! —

With joy return; — he will — he
must. 190

Well was it time to seek afar
Some refuge from impending war,
When e'en Clan-Alpine's rugged
swarm

Are cowed by the approaching
storm.

I saw their boats with many a
light,

Floating the livelong yesternight,
Shifting like flashes darted forth

By the red streamers of the north:
I marked at morn how close they
ride,

Thick moored by the lone islet's
side, 200

Like wild ducks couching in the
fen

When stoops the hawk upon the
glen.

Since this rude race dare not abide
The peril on the mainland side,
Shall not thy noble father's care
Some safe retreat for thee pre-
pare?'

X

ELLEN

'No, Allan, no! Pretext so kind
My wakeful terrors could not
blind.

When in such tender tone, yet
grave,

Douglas a parting blessing gave,
The tear that glistened in his eye
Drowned not his purpose fixed
and high. 212

My soul, though feminine and
weak,

Can image his; e'en as the lake,
Itself disturbed by slightest
stroke,

Reflects the invulnerable rock.
He hears report of battle rife,
He deems himself the cause of
strife.

I saw him redden when the theme
Turned, Allan, on thine idle dream
Of Malcolm Græme in fetters
bound, 221

Which I, thou saidst, about him
wound.

Think'st thou he trowed thine
omen aught?

O no! 't was apprehensive thought
For the kind youth, — for Roderick
too —

Let me be just — that friend so
true;

In danger both, and in our cause!
Minstrel, the Douglas dare not
pause.

Why else that solemn warning
given,

"If not on earth, we meet in heaven!" 230

Why else, to Cambus-kenneth's
fane,

If eve return him not again,

Am I to lie and make me known?

Alas, he goes to Scotland's throne,

Buys his friends' safety with his
own;

He goes to do — what I had done,
Had Douglas' daughter been his
son!

XI

'Nay, lovely Ellen! — dearest, nay!

If aught should his return delay,

He only named yon holy fane 240

As fitting place to meet again.

Be sure he's safe; and for the
Græme, —

Heaven's blessing on his gallant
name! —

My visioned sight may yet prove
true,

Nor bode of ill to him or you.

When did my gifted dream be-
guile?

Think of the stranger at the isle,
And think upon the harpings
slow

That presaged this approaching
woe! 249

Sooth was my prophecy of fear;

Believe it when it augurs cheer.

Would we had left this dismal
spot!

Ill luck still haunts a fairy grot.

Of such a wondrous tale I know —

Dear lady, change that look of
woe,

My harp was wont thy grief to
cheer.'

ELLEN

'Well, be it as thou wilt; I hear,

But cannot stop the bursting tear.'

The Minstrel tried his simple art,

But distant far was Ellen's heart.

XII

BALLAD

ALICE BRAND

Merry it is in the good greenwood,

When the mavis and merle are

singing. 262

When the deer sweeps by, and the

hounds are in cry,

And the hunter's horn is ringing.

'O Alice Brand, my native land

Is lost for love of you;

And we must hold by wood and
wold,

As outlaws wont to do.

'O Alice, 't was all for thy locks so

bright,

And 't was all for thine eyes so

blue, 270

That on the night of our luckless
flight

Thy brother bold I slew.

'Now must I teach to hew the
beech

The hand that held the glaive,

For leaves to spread our lowly
bed,

And stakes to fence our cave.

'And for vest of pall, thy fingers
small,

That wont on harp to stray,

A cloak must shear from the
slaughtered deer,

To keep the cold away.' 280

'O Richard! if my brother died,

'T was but a fatal chance;

For darkling was the battle tried,

And fortune sped the lance.

'If pall and vair no more I wear,

Nor thou the crimson sheen,

As warm, we'll say, is the russet
gray,

As gay the forest-green.

'And, Richard, if our lot be hard,
And lost thy native land, ²⁹⁰
Still Alice has her own Richard,
And he his Alice Brand.'

XIII

BALLAD CONTINUED

'T is merry, 't is merry, in good
greenwood;

So blithe Lady Alice is singing;
On the beech's pride, and oak's
brown side,

Lord Richard's axe is ringing.

Up spoke the moody Elfin King,
Who woned within the hill, —
Like wind in the porch of a ruined
church,

His voice was ghostly shrill. ³⁰⁰

'Why sounds yon stroke on beech
and oak,

Our moonlight circle's screen?

Or who comes here to chase the
deer,

Beloved of our Elfin Queen?

Or who may dare on wold to wear
The fairies' fatal green?

'Up, Urgan, up! to yon mortal hie,
For thou wert christened man;
For cross or sign thou wilt not fly,
For muttered word or ban. ³¹⁰

'Lay on him the curse of the
withered heart,

The curse of the sleepless eye;

Till he wish and pray that his life
would part,

Nor yet find leave to die.'

XIV

BALLAD CONTINUED

'T is merry, 't is merry, in good
greenwood,

Though the birds have stilled
their singing;

The evening blaze doth Alice raise,
And Richard is fagots bringing.

Up Urgan starts, that hideous
dwarf,

Before Lord Richard stands, ³²⁰
And, as he crossed and blessed
himself,

'I fear not sign,' quoth the grisly
elf,

'That is made with bloody
hands.'

But out then spoke she, Alice
Brand,

That woman void of fear, —

'And if there's blood upon his
hand,

'T is but the blood of deer.'

'Now loud thou liest, thou bold of
mood!

It cleaves unto his hand,

The stain of thine own kindly
blood, ³³⁰

The blood of Ethert Brand.'

Then forward stepped she, Alice
Brand,

And made the holy sign, —

'And if there's blood on Richard's
hand,

A spotless hand is mine.

'And I conjure thee, demon elf,
By Him whom demons fear,

To show us whence thou art thy-
self,

And what thine errand here?'

XV

BALLAD CONTINUED

'T is merry, 't is merry, in Fairy-
land, ³⁴⁰

When fairy birds are singing,

When the court doth ride by their
monarch's side.

With bit and bridle ringing:

'And gayly shines the Fairy-
land —

But all is glistening show,

Like the idle gleam that Decem-
ber's beam
Can dart on ice and snow.

'And fading, like that varied
gleam,
Is our inconstant shape,
Who now like knight and lady
seem, 350
And now like dwarf and ape.

'It was between the night and
day,
When the Fairy King has power,
That I sunk down in a sinful fray,
And 'twixt life and death was
snatched away
To the joyless Elfin bower.

'But wist I of a woman bold,
Who thrice my brow durst sign,
I might regain my mortal mould,
As fair a form as thine.' 360

She crossed him once — she
crossed him twice —
That lady was so brave;
The fouler grew his goblin hue,
The darker grew the cave.

She crossed him thrice, that lady
bold;
He rose beneath her hand
The fairest knight on Scottish
mould,
Her brother, Ethert Brand!

Merry it is in good greenwood,
When the mavis and merle were
singing, 370
But merrier were they in Dun-
fermline gray,
When all the bells were ringing.

XVI

Just as the minstrel sounds were
stayed,
A stranger climbed the steepy
glade;
His martial step, his stately mien,
His hunting-suit of Lincoln green,

His eagle glance, remembrance
claims —

'T is Snowdoun's Knight, 't is
James Fitz-James.

Ellen beheld as in a dream,
Then, starting, scarce suppressed
a scream: 380

'O stranger! in such hour of fear
What evil hap has brought thee
here?'

'An evil hap how can it be
That bids me look again on thee?
By promise bound, my former
guide

Met me betimes this morning-tide,
And marshalled over bank and
bourne

The happy path of my return.'
'The happy path! — what! said he
naught

Of war, of battle to be fought, 390
Of guarded pass?' 'No, by my
faith!

Nor saw I aught could augur
scathe.'

O haste thee, Allan, to the kern:
Yonder his tartans I discern;
Learn thou his purpose, and con-
jure

That he will guide the stranger
sure! —

What prompted thee, unhappy
man?

The meanest serf in Roderick's
clan

Had not been bribed, by love or
fear,

Unknown to him to guide thee
here.' 400

XVII

'Sweet Ellen, dear my life must
be,

Since it is worthy care from thee;
Yet life I hold but idle breath

When love or honor's weighed
with death.

Then let me profit by my chance,
And speak my purpose bold at
once.

I come to bear thee from a wild

Where ne'er before such blossom
smiled,

By this soft hand to lead thee far
From frantic scenes of feud and
war. 410

Near Bochart's my horses wait;
They bear us soon to Stirling gate.
I'll place thee in a lovely bower,
I'll guard thee like a tender
flower' —

'O hush, Sir Knight! 't were fe-
male art,

To say I do not read thy heart;
Too much, before, my selfish ear
Was idly soothed my praise to
hear.

That fatal bait hath lured thee
back,

In deathful hour, o'er dangerous
track; 420

And how, O how, can I atone
The wreck my vanity brought on! —
One way remains — I'll tell him
all —

Yes! struggling bosom, forth it
shall!

Thou, whose light folly bears the
blame,

Buy thine own pardon with thy
shame!

But first — my father is a man
Outlawed and exiled, under ban;
The price of blood is on his head,
With me 't were infamy to wed.

Still wouldst thou speak? — then
hear the truth! 431

Fitz-James, there is a noble youth
If yet he is! — exposed for me
And mine to dread extremity —
Thou hast the secret of my heart;
Forgive, be generous, and depart!'

XVIII

Fitz-James knew every wily train
A lady's fickle heart to gain,
But here he knew and felt them
vain.

There shot no glance from Ellen's
eye, 440

To give her steadfast speech the
lie;

In maiden confidence she stood,
Though mantled in her cheek the
blood,

And told her love with such a sigh
Of deep and hopeless agony,
As death had sealed her Malcolm's
doom

And she sat sorrowing on his
tomb.

Hope vanished from Fitz-James's
eye,

But not with hope fled sympathy.
He proffered to attend her
side, 450

As brother would a sister guide.
'O little know'st thou Roderick's
heart!

Safer for both we go apart.

O haste thee, and from Allan learn
If thou mayst trust yon wily kern.'
With hand upon his forehead laid,
The conflict of his mind to shade,

A parting step or two he made;
Then, as some thought had crossed
his brain,

He paused, and turned, and came
again. 460

XIX

'Hear, lady, yet a parting word! —
It chanced in fight that my poor
sword

Preserved the life of Scotland's
lord.

This ring the grateful Monarch
gave,

And bade, when I had boon to
crave,

To bring it back, and boldly claim
The recompense that I would
name.

Ellen, I am no courtly lord,
But one who lives by lance and
sword,

Whose castle is his helm and
shield, 470

His lordship the embattled field.
What from a prince can I demand,
Who neither reck of state nor
land?

Ellen, thy hand — the ring is thine;

Each guard and usher knows the
sign.

Seek thou the King without delay ;
This signet shall secure thy way :
And claim thy suit, what'er it be,
As ransom of his pledge to me.'

He placed the golden circlet on,
Paused — kissed her hand — and
then was gone. ⁴⁸¹

The aged Minstrel stood aghast,
So hastily Fitz-James shot past.
He joined his guide, and wending
down

The ridges of the mountain brown,
Across the stream they took their
way

That joins Loch Katrine to Ach-
ray.

XX

All in the Trosachs' glen was still,
Noontide was sleeping on the hill :
Sudden his guide whooped loud
and high — ⁴⁹⁰

'Murdoch! was that a signal
cry?' —

He stammered forth, 'I shout to
scare

Yon raven from his dainty fare.'
He looked — he knew the raven's
prey,

His own brave steed: 'Ah! gal-
lant gray!

For thee — for me, perchance —
't were well

We ne'er had seen the Trosachs'
dell. —

Murdoch, move first — but silently;
Whistle or whoop, and thou shalt
die!'

Jealous and sullen on they
fared, ⁵⁰⁰
Each silent, each upon his guard.

XXI

Now wound the path its dizzy
ledge

Around a precipice's edge,
When lo! a wasted female form,
Blighted by wrath of sun and
storm,

In tattered weeds and wild array,
Stood on a cliff beside the way,
And glancing round her restless
eye,

Upon the wood, the rock, the
sky,

Seemed naught to mark, yet all to
spy. ⁵¹⁰

Her brow was wreathed with
gaudy broom;

With gesture wild she waved a
plume

Of feathers, which the eagles fling
To crag and cliff from dusky wing;
Such spoils her desperate step had
sought,

Where scarce was footing for the
goat.

The tartan plaid she first descried,
And shrieked till all the rocks re-
plied ;

As loud she laughed when near
they drew,

For then the Lowland garb she
knew; ⁵²⁰

And then her hands she wildly
wrung,

And then she wept, and then she
sung —

She sung! — the voice, in better
time,

Perchance to harp or lute might
chime;

And now, though strained and
roughened, still

Rung wildly sweet to dale and
hill.

XXII

SONG

They bid me sleep, they bid me
pray,

They say my brain is warped
and wrung —

I cannot sleep on Highland brae,
I cannot pray in Highland

tongue. ⁵³⁰

But were I now where Allan
glides,
Or heard my native Devan's tides,

So sweetly would I rest, and pray
That Heaven would close my win-
try day !

'T was thus my hair they bade me
braid,

They made me to the church re-
pair;

It was my bridal morn they said,
And my true love would meet
me there.

But woe betide the cruel guile
That drowned in blood the morn-
ing smile ! 540

And woe betide the fairy dream !
I only waked to sob and scream.

XXIII

'Who is this maid? what means
her lay?

She hovers o'er the hollow way,
And flutters wide her mantle gray,
As the lone heron spreads his
wing,

By twilight, o'er a haunted spring.'

'T is Blanche of Devan,' Murdoch
said,

'A crazed and captive Lowland
maid,

Ta'en on the morn she was a
bride, 550

When Roderick forayed Devan-
side.

The gay bridegroom resistance
made,

And felt our Chief's unconquered
blade.

I marvel she is now at large,
But oft she 'scapes from Maudlin's
charge. —

Hence, brain-sick fool!' — He
raised his bow : —

'Now, if thou strik'st her but one
blow,

I'll pitch thee from the cliff as
far

As ever peasant pitched a bar !'

'Thanks, champion, thanks!' the
Maniac cried. 560

And pressed her to Fitz-James's
side.

'See the gray pennons I prepare,
To seek my true love through the
air !

I will not lend that savage groom,
To break his fall, one downy
plume !

No ! — deep amid disjointed stones,
The wolves shall batten on his
bones,

And then shall his detested plaid,
By bush and brier in mid-air
stayed,

Wave forth a banner fair and
free, 570

Meet signal for their revelry.'

XXIV

'Hush thee, poor maiden, and be
still !'

'O ! thou look'st kindly, and I
will.

Mine eye has dried and wasted
been,

But still it loves the Lincoln green ;
And, though mine ear is all un-
strung,

Still, still it loves the Lowland
tongue.

'For O my sweet William was
forester true,

He stole poor Blanche's heart
away !

His coat it was all of the green-
wood hue, 580

And so blithely he trilled the
Lowland lay !

'It was not that I meant to
tell . . .

But thou art wise and guessest
well.'

Then, in a low and broken tone,
And hurried note, the song went
on.

Still on the Clansman fearfully
She fixed her apprehensive eye,
Then turned it on the Knight, and
then

Her look glanced wildly o'er the
glen.

XXV

'The toils are pitched, and the
stakes are set,— 590
Ever sing merrily, merrily;
The bows they bend, and the
knives they whet,
Hunters live so cheerily.

'It was a stag, a stag of ten,
Bearing its branches sturdily;
He came stately down the glen,—
Ever sing hardily, hardily.

'It was there he met with a
wounded doe,
She was bleeding deathfully;
She warned him of the toils below,
O, so faithfully, faithfully! 601

'He had an eye, and he could
heed,—
Ever sing warily, warily;
He had a foot, and he could
speed,—
Hunters watch so narrowly.'

XXVI

Fitz-James's mind was passion-
tossed,
When Ellen's hints and fears were
lost;
But Murdoch's shout suspicion
wrought,
And Blanche's song conviction
brought.
Not like a stag that spies the
snare, 610
But lion of the hunt aware,
He waved at once his blade on
high,
'Disclose thy treachery, or die!'
Forth at full speed the Clansman
flew,
But in his race his bow he drew.
The shaft just grazed Fitz-James's
crest,
And thrilled in Blanche's faded
breast.—
Murdoch of Alpine! prove thy
speed,
For ne'er had Alpine's son such
need;

With heart of fire, and foot of
wind, 620
The fierce avenger is behind!
Fate judges of the rapid strife—
The forfeit death—the prize is
life;
Thy kindred ambush lies before,
Close couched upon the heathery
moor;
Them couldst thou reach!—it may
not be—
Thine ambushed kin thou ne'er
shalt see,
The fiery Saxon gains on thee!—
Resistless speeds the deadly
thrust,
As lightning strikes the pine to
dust; 630
With foot and hand Fitz-James
must strain
Ere he can win his blade again.
Bent o'er the fallen with falcon
eye,
He grimly smiled to see him die,
Then slower wended back his way,
Where the poor maiden bleeding
lay.

XXVII

She sat beneath the birchen tree,
Her elbow resting on her knee;
She had withdrawn the fatal shaft,
And gazed on it, and feebly
laughed; 640
Her wreath of broom and feathers
gray,
Daggled with blood, beside her
lay.
The Knight to stanch the life-
stream tried,—
'Stranger, it is in vain!' she cried.
'This hour of death has given me
more
Of reason's power than years be-
fore;
For, as these ebbing veins decay,
My frenzied visions fade away.
A helpless injured wretch I die,
And something tells me in thine
eye 650
That thou wert mine avenger
born.

Seest thou this tress? — O, still I've
worn
This little tress of yellow hair,
Through danger, frenzy, and de-
spair!
It once was bright and clear as
thine,
But blood and tears have dimmed
its shine.
I will not tell thee when 't was
shred,
Nor from what guiltless victim's
head, —
My brain would turn! but it shall
wave 659
Like plumage on thy helmet brave,
Till sun and wind shall bleach the
stain,
And thou wilt bring it me again.
I waver still. — O God! more
bright
Let reason beam her parting
light! —
O, by thy knighthood's honored
sign,
And for thy life preserved by
mine,
When thou shalt see a darksome
man,
Who boasts him Chief of Alpine's
Clan,
With tartans broad and shadowy
plume,
And hand of blood, and brow of
gloom, 670
Be thy heart bold, thy weapon
strong,
And wreak poor Blanche of De-
van's wrong! —
They watch for thee by pass and
fell . . .
Avoid the path . . . O God! . . .
farewell!

XXXIII

A kindly heart had brave Fitz-
James;
Fast poured his eyes at pity's
claims;
And now, with mingled grief and
ire,

He saw the murdered maid expire.
'God, in my need, be my relief, 679
As I wreak this on yonder Chief!'
A lock from Blanche's tresses fair
He blended with her bridegroom's
hair;
The mingled braid in blood he
died,
And placed it on his bonnet-side:
'By Him whose word is truth, I
swear,
No other favor will I wear,
Till this sad token I imbrue
In the best blood of Roderick
Dhu! —
But hark! what means yon faint
halloo?
The chase is up, — but they shall
know, 690
The stag at bay's a dangerous
foe.'
Barred from the known but guarded
way,
Through copse and cliffs Fitz-
James must stray,
And oft must change his desperate
track,
By stream and precipice turned
back.
Heartless, fatigued, and faint, at
length,
From lack of food and loss of
strength,
He couched him in a thicket hoar,
And thought his toils and perils
o'er: — 699
'Of all my rash adventures past,
This frantic feat must prove the
last!
Who e'er so mad but might have
guessed
That all this Highland hornet's
nest
Would muster up in swarms so
soon
As e'er they heard of bands at
Doune? —
Like bloodhounds now they search
me out, —
Hark, to the whistle and the
shout! —

If farther through the wilds I go,
 I only fall upon the foe:
 I'll couch me here till evening
 gray. 710
 Then darkling try my dangerous
 way.'

XXIX

The shades of eve come slowly
 down,
 The woods are wrapt in deeper
 brown,
 The owl awakens from her dell,
 The fox is heard upon the fell;
 Enough remains of glimmering
 light
 To guide the wanderer's steps
 aright,
 Yet not enough from far to show
 His figure to the watchful foe. 719
 With cautious step and ear awake,
 He climbs the crag and threads
 the brake;
 And not the summer solstice there
 Tempered the midnight mountain
 air,
 But every breeze that swept the
 wold
 Benumbed his drenched limbs
 with cold.
 In dread, in danger, and alone,
 Famished and chilled, through
 ways unknown,
 Tangled and steep, he journeyed
 on;
 Till, as a rock's huge point he
 turned,
 A watch-fire close before him
 burned. 730

XXX

Beside its embers red and clear,
 Basked in his plaid a mountaineer;
 And up he sprung with sword in
 hand,—
 'Thy name and purpose! Saxon,
 stand!' 'A stranger.' 'What dost thou re-
 quire?'
 'Rest and a guide, and food and
 fire.

My life's beset, my path is lost,
 The gale has chilled my limbs with
 frost.'

'Art thou a friend to Roderick?'
 'No.'

'Thou dar'st not call thyself a
 foe?' 740

'I dare! to him and all the band
 He brings to aid his murderous
 hand.'

'Bold words! — but, though the
 beast of game

The privilege of chase may claim,
 Though space and law the stag
 we lend,

Ere hound we slip or bow we
 bend,

Who ever recked, where, how, or
 when,

The prowling fox was trapped or
 slain?

Thus treacherous scouts, — yet
 sure they lie,

Who say thou cam'st a secret
 spy!' — 750

'They do, by heaven! — come Rod-
 erick Dhu,

And of his clan the boldest two,
 And let me but till morning rest,
 I write the falsehood on their
 crest.'

'If by the blaze I mark aright,
 Thou bear'st the belt and spur of
 Knight.'

'Then by these tokens mayst
 thou know

Each proud oppressor's mortal
 foe.'

'Enough, enough; sit down and
 share 759

A soldier's couch, a soldier's fare.'

XXXI

He gave him of his Highland
 cheer,

The hardened flesh of mountain
 deer;

Dry fuel on the fire he laid,
 And bade the Saxon share his
 plaid.

He tended him like welcome guest,

Then thus his further speech addressed :—

'Stranger, I am to Roderick Dhu
A clansman born, a kinsman true :
Each word against his honor
spoke 769

Demands of me avenging stroke ;
Yet more, — upon thy fate, 't is
said,

A mighty augury is laid.

It rests with me to wind my
horn,—

Thou art with numbers overborne ;
It rests with me, here, brand to
brand,

Worn as thou art, to bid thee
stand :

But, not for clan, nor kindred's
cause,

Will I depart from honor's laws ;
To assail a wearied man were
shame,

And stranger is a holy name ; 780
Guidance and rest, and food and
fire,

In vain he never must require.

Then rest thee here till dawn of
day ;

Myself will guide thee on the way
O'er stock and stone, through
watch and ward,

Till past Clan-Alpine's outmost
guard,

As far as Coilantogle's ford ;
From thence thy warrant is thy
sword.'

'I take thy courtesy, by heaven,
As freely as 't is nobly given !' 790

'Well, rest thee ; for the bittern's
cry

Sings us the lake's wild lullaby.'

With that he shook the gathered
heath,

And spread his plaid upon the
wreath ;

And the brave foemen, side by
side,

Lay peaceful down like brothers
tried,

And slept until the dawning beam
Purpled the mountain and the
stream.

CANTO FIFTH

THE COMBAT

I

FAIR as the earliest beam of east-
ern light,

When first, by the bewildered
pilgrim spied,

It smiles upon the dreary brow of
night,

And silvers o'er the torrent's
foaming tide,

And lights the fearful path on
mountain-side, —

Fair as that beam, although the
fairest far,

Giving to horror grace, to danger
pride,

Shine martial Faith, and Cour-
tesy's bright star,

Through all the wreckful storms
that cloud the brow of War.

II

That early beam, so fair and
sheen, 10

Was twinkling through the hazel
screen,

When, rousing at its glimmer red,
The warriors left their lowly bed,

Looked out upon the dappled sky,
Muttered their soldier matins by,

And then awaked their fire, to
steal,

As short and rude, their soldier
meal.

That o'er, the Gael around him
threw

His graceful plaid of varied hue,
And, true to promise, led the way,

By thicket green and mountain
gray. 21

A wildering path ! — they winded
now

Along the precipice's brow,
Commanding the rich scenes be-

neath,
The windings of the Forth and
Teith,

And all the vales between that
lie,

Till Stirling's turrets melt in sky ;
Then, sunk in copse, their farthest
glance

Gained not the length of horse-
man's lance.

'T was oft so steep, the foot was
fain ³⁰

Assistance from the hand to gain ;
So tangled oft that, bursting
through,

Each hawthorn shed her showers
of dew,—

That diamond dew, so pure and
clear,

It rivals all but Beauty's tear !

III

At length they came where, stern
and steep,

The hill sinks down upon the deep.
Here Vennachar in silver flows,

There, ridge on ridge, Benledi rose ;
Ever the hollow path twined on, ⁴⁰

Beneath steep bank and threaten-
ing stone ;

A hundred men might hold the
post

With hardihood against a host.

The rugged mountain's scanty
cloak

Was dwarfish shrubs of birch and
oak,

With shingles bare, and cliffs be-
tween,

And patches bright of bracken
green,

And heather black, that waved so
high,

It held the copse in rivalry.

But where the lake slept deep and
still, ⁵⁰

Dank osiers fringed the swamp
and hill ;

And oft both path and hill were
torn,

Where wintry torrent down had
borne,

And heaped upon the cumbered
land

Its wreck of gravel, rocks, and
sand.

So toilsome was the road to trace,
The guide, abating of his pace,
Led slowly through the pass's
jaws,

And asked Fitz-James by what
strange cause

He sought these wilds, traversed
by few, ⁶⁰

Without a pass from Roderick
Dhu.

IV

'Brave Gael, my pass, in danger
tried,

Hangs in my belt and by my side,
Yet, sooth to tell,' the Saxon said,

'I dreamt not now to claim its aid.
When here, but three days since,

I came,
Bewildered in pursuit of game,

All seemed as peaceful and as still
As the mist slumbering on yon hill ;

Thy dangerous Chief was then
afar, ⁷⁰

Nor soon expected back from war.
Thus said, at least, my mountain-

guide,
Though deep perchance the villain

lied.'

'Yet why a second venture try ?'
'A warrior thou, and ask me

why !—
Moves our free course by such
fixed cause

As gives the poor mechanic laws ?
Enough, I sought to drive away

The lazy hours of peaceful day ;
Slight cause will then suffice to

guide ⁸⁰
A Knight's free footsteps far and

wide,—
A falcon flown, a greyhound

strayed,
The merry glance of mountain

maid ;
Or, if a path be dangerous known,

The danger's self is lure alone.'

V

'Thy secret keep, I urge thee
not ;—

Yet, ere again ye sought this spot,
Say, heard ye naught of Lowland
war,

Against Clan-Alpine, raised by
Mar?’

‘No, by my word; — of bands pre-
pared ⁹⁰

To guard King James’s sports I
heard;

Nor doubt I aught, but, when they
hear

This muster of the mountaineer,
Their pennons will abroad be flung,
Which else in Doune had peaceful
hung.’

‘Free be they flung! for we were
loath

Their silken folds should feast the
moth.

Free be they flung! — as free shall
wave

Clan-Alpine’s pine in banner brave.
But, stranger, peaceful since you

came, ¹⁰⁰

Bewildered in the mountain-game,
Whence the bold boast by which
you show

Vich-Alpine’s vowed and mortal
foe?’

‘Warrior, but yester-morn I knew
Naught of thy Chieftain, Roderick

Dhu,
Save as an outlawed desperate

man,
The chief of a rebellious clan,

Who, in the Regent’s court and
sight,

With ruffian dagger stabbed a
knight; ¹⁰⁹

Yet this alone might from his part
Sever each true and loyal heart.’

VI

Wrathful at such arraignment
foul,

Dark lowered the clansman’s sa-
ble scowl.

A space he paused, then sternly
said,

‘And heardst thou why he drew
his blade?’

Heardst thou that shameful word
and blow

Brought Roderick’s vengeance on
his foe?

What recked the Chieftain if he
stood

On Highland heath or Holy-Rood?
He rights such wrong where it is

given, ¹²⁰

If it were in the court of heaven.’
‘Still was it outrage; — yet, ’t is

true,
Not then claimed sovereignty his

due;
While Albany with feeble hand

Held borrowed truncheon of com-
mand,

The young King, mewed in Stir-
ling tower,

Was stranger to respect and
power.

But then, thy Chieftain’s robber
life! —

Winning mean prey by causeless
strife,

Wrenching from ruined Lowland
swain ¹³⁰

His herds and harvest reared in
vain, —

Methinks a soul like thine should
scorn

The spoils from such foul foray
borne.’

VII

The Gael beheld him grim the
while,

And answered with disdainful
smile:

‘Saxon, from yonder mountain
high,

I marked thee send delighted eye
Far to the south and east, where

lay,
Extended in succession gay,

Deep waving fields and pastures
green, ¹⁴⁰

With gentle slopes and groves be-
tween: —

These fertile plains, that softened
vale,

Were once the birthright of the
Gael;

The stranger came with iron hand,
And from our fathers reft the land.
Where dwell we now? See, rudely
swell

Crag over crag, and fell o'er fell.
Ask we this savage hill we tread
For fattened steer or household
bread,

Ask we for flocks these shingles
dry, 150

And well the mountain might re-
ply, —

"To you, as to your sires of yore,
Belong the target and claymore!
I give you shelter in my breast,
Your own good blades must win
the rest."

Pent in this fortress of the North,
Think'st thou we will not sally
forth,

To spoil the spoiler as we may,
And from the robber rend the
prey?

Ay, by my soul! — While on yon
plain 160

The Saxon rears one shock of
grain,

While of ten thousand herds there
strays

But one along yon river's maze, —
The Gael, of plain and river heir,
Shall with strong hand redeem his
share.

Where live the mountain Chiefs
who hold

That plundering Lowland field
and fold

Is aught but retribution true?
Seek other cause 'gainst Roderick
Dhu.'

VIII

Answered Fitz-James: 'And, if I
sought, 170

Think'st thou no other could be
brought?

What deem ye of my path way-
laid?

My life given o'er to ambuscade?'

'As of a need to rashness due:
Hadst thou sent warning fair and
true. —

I seek my hound or falcon strayed,
I seek, good faith, a Highland
maid, —

Free hadst thou been to come and
go;

But secret path marks secret foe.
Nor yet for this, even as a spy, 180
Hadst thou, unheard, been doomed
to die,

Save to fulfil an augury.'

'Well, let it pass; nor will I now
Fresh cause of enmity avow,
To chafe thy mood and cloud thy
brow.

Enough, I am by promise tied
To match me with this man of
pride:

Twice have I sought Clan-Alpine's
glen

In peace; but when I come again,
I come with banner, brand, and
bow, 190

As leader seeks his mortal foe.

For love-lorn swain in lady's
bower

Ne'er panted for the appointed
hour,

As I, until before me stand
This rebel Chieftain and his
band!'

IX

'Have then thy wish!' — He whis-
tled shrill,

And he was answered from the
hill;

Wild as the scream of the curlew,
From crag to crag the signal flew.
Instant, through copse and heath,
arose 200

Bonnets and spears and bended
bows;

On right, on left, above, below,
Sprung up at once the lurking foe;
From shingles gray their lances
start,

The bracken bush sends forth the
dart,

The rushes and the willow-wand
Are bristling into axe and brand,
And every tuft of broom gives life
To plaided warrior armed for
 strife. 209

That whistle garrisoned the glen
At once with full five hundred men,
As if the yawning hill to heaven
A subterranean host had given.

Watching their leader's beck and
 will,

All silent there they stood and
 still.

Like the loose crags whose threat-
 ening mass

Lay tottering o'er the hollow pass,
As if an infant's touch could urge
Their headlong passage down the
 verge,

With step and weapon forward
 flung, 220

Upon the mountain-side they
 hung.

The Mountaineer cast glance of
 pride

Along Benledi's living side,
Then fixed his eye and sable brow
Full on Fitz-James: 'How say'st
 thou now?

These are Clan-Alpine's warriors
 true;

And, Saxon, — I am Roderick
 Dhu!

X

Fitz-James was brave: — though
 to his heart

The life-blood thrilled with sudden
 start,

He manned himself with dauntless
 air, 230

Returned the Chief his haughty
 stare,

His back against a rock he bore,
And firmly placed his foot be-
 fore: —

'Come one, come all! this rock
 shall fly

From its firm base as soon as I.'
Sir Roderick marked, — and in his
 eyes

Respect was mingled with sur-
 prise,

And the stern joy which warriors
 feel

In foeman worthy of their steel.

Short space he stood — then waved
 his hand: 240

Down sunk the disappearing
 band;

Each warrior vanished where he
 stood,

In broom or bracken, heath or
 wood;

Sunk brand and spear and bended
 bow,

In osiers pale and copses low;

It seemed as if their mother Earth
Had swallowed up her warlike
 birth.

The wind's last breath had tossed
 in air

Pennon and plaid and plumage
 fair, —

The next but swept a lone hill-
 side, 250

Where heath and fern were wav-
 ing wide:

The sun's last glance was glinted
 back

From spear and glaive, from targe
 and jack;

The next, all unreflected, shone
On bracken green and cold gray
 stone.

XI

Fitz-James looked round, — yet
 scarce believed

The witness that his sight re-
 ceived;

Such apparition well might seem
Delusion of a dreadful dream. 259

Sir Roderick in suspense he eyed,
And to his look the Chief replied:
'Fear naught — nay, that I need
 not say —

But — doubt not aught from mine
 array.

Thou art my guest; — I pledged
 my word

As far as Coilantogle ford:

Nor would I call a clansman's
 brand
 For aid against one valiant hand,
 Though on our strife lay every
 vale
 Rent by the Saxon from the
 Gael. 269
 So move we on; — I only meant
 To show the reed on which you
 leant,
 Deeming this path you might pur-
 sue
 Without a pass from Roderick
 Dhu.
 They moved; — I said Fitz-James
 was brave
 As ever knight that belted glaive,
 Yet dare not say that now his
 blood
 Kept on its wont and tempered
 flood,
 As, following Roderick's stride, he
 drew
 That seeming lonesome pathway
 through,
 Which yet by fearful proof was
 rife 280
 With lances, that, to take his
 life,
 Waited but signal from a guide,
 So late dishonored and defied.
 Ever, by stealth, his eye sought
 round
 The vanished guardians of the
 ground,
 And still from copse and heather
 deep
 Fancy saw spear and broadsword
 peep,
 And in the plover's shrilly strain
 The signal whistle heard again.
 Nor breathed he free till far be-
 hind 290
 The pass was left; for then they
 wind
 Along a wide and level green,
 Where neither tree nor tuft was
 seen,
 Nor rush nor bush of broom was
 near,
 To hide a bonnet or a spear.

XII

The Chief in silence strode before,
 And reached that torrent's sound-
 ing shore,
 Which, daughter of three mighty
 lakes,
 From Vennachar in silver breaks,
 Sweeps through the plain, and
 ceaseless mines 300
 On Bochastle the mouldering
 lines,
 Where Rome, the Empress of the
 world,
 Of yore her eagle wings unfurled.
 And here his course the Chieftain
 stayed,
 Threw down his target and his
 plaid,
 And to the Lowland warrior said:
 'Bold Saxon! to his promise just,
 Vich-Alpine has discharged his
 trust.
 This murderous Chief, this ruth-
 less man,
 This head of a rebellious clan, 310
 Hath led thee safe, through watch
 and ward,
 Far past Clan-Alpine's outmost
 guard.
 Now, man to man, and steel to
 steel,
 A Chieftain's vengeance thou shalt
 feel.
 See, here all vantageless I stand,
 Armed like thyself with single
 brand;
 For this is Coilantogle ford,
 And thou must keep thee with thy
 sword.

XIII

The Saxon paused: 'I ne'er de-
 layed,
 When foeman bade me draw my
 blade; 320
 Nay more, brave Chief, I vowed
 thy death;
 Yet sure thy fair and generous
 faith,
 And my deep debt for life pre-
 served,

A better meed have well deserved:
Can naught but blood our feud
atone?

Are there no means?' — 'No,
stranger, none!

And hear, — to fire thy flagging
zeal, —

The Saxon cause rests on thy
steel;

For thus spoke Fate by prophet
bred 329

Between the living and the dead:
"Who spills the foremost foeman's
life,

His party conquers in the strife."'

'Then, by my word,' the Saxon
said,

'The riddle is already read.

Seek yonder brake beneath the
cliff, —

There lies Red Murdoch, stark
and stiff.

Thus Fate hath solved her pro-
phesy;

Then yield to Fate, and not to me.

To James at Stirling let us go, 339

When, if thou wilt be still his foe,

Or if the King shall not agree

To grant thee grace and favor free,

I plight mine honor, oath, and
word

That, to thy native strengths re-
stored,

With each advantage shalt thou
stand

That aids thee now to guard thy
land.'

XIV

Dark lightning flashed from Rod-
erick's eye:

'Soars thy presumption, then, so
high, 348

Because a wretched kern ye slew,

Homage to name to Roderick Dhu?

He yields not, he, to man nor Fate!

Thou add'st but fuel to my hate; —

My clansman's blood demands re-
venge.

Not yet prepared? — By heaven, I
change

My thought, and hold thy valor
light

As that of some vain carpet
knight,

Who ill deserved my courteous
care,

And whose best boast is but to
wear

A braid of his fair lady's hair.'

'I thank thee, Roderick, for the
word! 360

It nerves my heart, it steels my
sword;

For I have sworn this braid to
stain

In the best blood that warms thy
vein.

Now, truce, farewell! and, ruth,
begone! —

Yet think not that by thee alone,
Proud Chief! can courtesy be
shown;

Though not from copse, or heath,
or cairn,

Start at my whistle clansmen stern,

Of this small horn one feeble blast

Would fearful odds against thee
cast. 370

But fear not — doubt not — which
thou wilt —

We try this quarrel hilt to hilt.'

Then each at once his falchion
drew,

Each on the ground his scabbard
threw,

Each looked to sun and stream
and plain

As what they ne'er might see
again;

Then foot and point and eye op-
posed,

In dubious strife they darkly
closed.

XV

Ill fared it then with Roderick
Dhu,

That on the field his targe he
threw, 380

Whose brazen studs and tough
bull-hide

Had death so often dashed aside;
For, trained abroad his arms to
wield,

Fitz-James's blade was sword and
shield.

He practised every pass and ward,
To thrust, to strike, to feint, to
guard;

While less expert, though stronger
far,

The Gael maintained unequal war.
Three times in closing strife they
stood,

And thrice the Saxon blade drank
blood; 390

No stinted draught, no scanty tide,
The gushing flood the tartans dyed.

Fierce Roderick felt the fatal
drain,

And showered his blows like win-
try rain;

And, as firm rock or castle-roof
Against the winter shower is
proof,

The foe, invulnerable still,
Foiled his wild rage by steady
skill;

Till, at advantage ta'en, his brand
Forced Roderick's weapon from
his hand, 400

And backward borne upon the lea,
Brought the proud Chieftain to his
knee.

XVI

'Now yield thee, or by Him who
made

The world, thy heart's blood dyes
my blade!'

'Thy threats, thy mercy, I defy!
Let recreant yield, who fears to
die.'

Like adder darting from his coil,
Like wolf that dashes through the
toil,

Like mountain-cat who guards her
young,

Full at Fitz-James's throat he
sprung; 410

Received, but recked not of a
wound,

And locked his arms his foeman
round. —

Now, gallant Saxon, hold thine
own!

No maiden's hand is round thee
thrown!

That desperate grasp thy frame
might feel

Through bars of brass and triple
steel!

They tug, they strain! down, down
they go,

The Gael above, Fitz-James below.
The Chieftain's gripe his throat
compressed,

His knee was planted on his
breast; 420

His clotted locks he backward
threw,

Across his brow his hand he drew,
From blood and mist to clear his
sight,

Then gleamed aloft his dagger
bright!

But hate and fury ill supplied
The stream of life's exhausted tide,
And all too late the advantage
came,

To turn the odds of deadly game;
For, while the dagger gleamed on
high,

Reeled soul and sense, reeled brain
and eye. 430

Down came the blow! but in the
heath

The erring blade found bloodless
sheath.

The struggling foe may now un-
clasp

The fainting Chief's relaxing grasp:
Unwounded from the dreadful
close,

But breathless all, Fitz-James
arose.

XVII

He faltered thanks to Heaven for
life,

Redeemed, unhopd, from despe-
rate strife:

Next on his foe his look he cast,

Whose every gasp appeared his
last; 440

In Roderick's gore he dipped the
braid, —

'Poor Blanche! thy wrongs are
dearly paid;

Yet with thy foe must die, or live,
The praise that faith and valor
give.'

With that he blew a bugle note,
Undid the collar from his throat,
Unbonneted, and by the wave
Sat down his brow and hands to
lave.

Then faint afar are heard the feet
Of rushing steeds in gallop fleet;
The sounds increase, and now are
seen 451

Four mounted squires in Lincoln
green;

Two who bear lance, and two who
lead

By loosened rein a saddled steed;
Each onward held his headlong
course,

And by Fitz-James reined up his
horse, —

With wonder viewed the bloody
spot, —

'Exclaim not, gallants! question
not. —

You, Herbert and Luffness, alight,
And bind the wounds of yonder
knight; 460

Let the gray palfrey bear his
weight,

We destined for a fairer freight,
And bring him on to Stirling
straight;

I will before at better speed,
To seek fresh horse and fitting
weed.

The sun rides high; — I must be
bounè

To see the archer-game at noon;
But lightly Bayard clears the lea. —
De Vaux and Herries, follow me.

XVIII

'Stand, Bayard, stand!' — the steed
obeyed, 470

With arching neck and bended
head,

And glancing eye and quivering
ear,

As if he loved his lord to hear.

No foot Fitz-James in stirrup
stayed,

No grasp upon the saddle laid,
But wreathed his left hand in the
mane,

And lightly bounded from the
plain,

Turned on the horse his armed
heel,

And stirred his courage with the
steel.

Bounded the fiery steed in air, 480
The rider sat erect and fair,

Then like a bolt from steel cross-
bow

Forth launched, along the plain
they go.

They dashed that rapid torrent
through,

And up Carhonie's hill they flew;
Still at the gallop pricked the
Knight,

His merry-men followed as they
might.

Along thy banks, swift Teith, they
ride,

And in the race they mock thy
tide; 489

Torry and Lendrick now are past,
And Deanstown lies behind them
cast;

They rise, the bannered towers of
Doune,

They sink in distant woodland
soon;

Blair-Drummond sees the hoofs
strike fire,

They sweep like breeze through
Ochertyre;

They mark just glance and disap-
pear

The lofty brow of ancient Kier;
They bathe their coursers' swelter-
ing sides,

Dark Forth! amid thy sluggish
tides,

And on the opposing shore take
ground, 500

With plash, with scramble, and
with bound.

Right-hand they leave thy cliffs,
Craig-Forth!

And soon the bulwark of the North,
Gray Stirling, with her towers and
town,

Upon their fleet career looked
down.

XIX

As up the flinty path they strained,
Sudden his steed the leader
reined;

A signal to his squire he flung,
Who instant to his stirrup
sprung:—

‘Seest thou, De Vaux, yon woods-
man gray, 510

Who townward holds the rocky
way,

Of stature tall and poor array?
Mark’st thou the firm, yet active
stride,

With which he scales the moun-
tain-side?

Know’st thou from whence he
comes, or whom?’

‘No, by my word;—a burly groom
He seems, who in the field or
chase

A baron’s train would nobly
grace—’

‘Out, out, De Vaux! can fear sup-
ply,

And jealousy, no sharper eye? 520
Afar, ere to the hill he drew,

That stately form and step I knew;
Like form in Scotland is not
seen,

Treads not such step on Scottish
green.

’T is James of Douglas, by Saint
Serle!

The uncle of the banished Earl.
Away, away, to court, to show

The near approach of dreaded foe:
The King must stand upon his
guard;

Douglas and he must meet pre-
pared.’ 530

Then right-hand wheeled their
steeds, and straight

They won the Castle’s postern
gate.

XX

The Douglas who had bent his
way

From Cambus-kenneth’s abbey
gray,

Now, as he climbed the rocky
shelf,

Held sad communion with him-
self:—

‘Yes! all is true my fears could
frame;

A prisoner lies the noble Græme,
And fiery Roderick soon will feel
The vengeance of the royal steel.

I, only I, can ward their fate,—
God grant the ransom come not

late! 542
The Abbess hath her promise
given,

My child shall be the bride of
Heaven;—

Be pardoned one repining tear!
For He who gave her knows how

dear,
How excellent!—but that is by,

And now my business is—to
die.—

Ye towers! within whose circuit
dread 549

A Douglas by his sovereign bled;
And thou, O sad and fatal mound!

That oft hast heard the death-axe
sound,

As on the noblest of the land
Fell the stern headsman’s bloody

hand,—
The dungeon, block, and nameless

tomb
Prepare—for Douglas seeks his

doom!
But hark! what blithe and jolly

peal
Makes the Franciscan steeple
reel?

And see ! upon the crowded street,
In motley groups what masquers
meet ! 560

Banner and pageant, pipe and
drum,

And merry morrice-dancers come.
I guess, by all this quaint array,
The burghers hold their sports to-
day.

James will be there ; he loves such
show,

Where the good yeoman bends his
bow,

And the tough wrestler foils his
foe,

As well as where, in proud career,
The high-born tilter shivers spear.
I'll follow to the Castle-park, 570

And play my prize ;— King James
shall mark

If age has tamed these sinews
stark,

Whose force so oft in happier
days

His boyish wonder loved to praise.'

XXI

The Castle gates were open flung,
The quivering drawbridge rocked
and rung.

And echoed loud the flinty street
Beneath the courser's clattering
feet,

As slowly down the steep descent
Fair Scotland's King and nobles
went, 580

While all along the crowded way.
Was jubilee and loud huzza.

And ever James was bending
low

To his white jennet's saddle-bow,
Doffing his cap to city dame,
Who smiled and blushed for pride
and shame.

And well the simperer might be
vain,—

He chose the fairest of the train.
Gravely he greets each city sire,
Commends each pageant's quaint
attire, 590

Gives to the dancers thanks aloud,

And smiles and nods upon the
crowd,

Who rend the heavens with their
acclaims,—

'Long live the Commons' King,
King James !'

Behind the King thronged peer
and knight,

And noble dame and damsel
bright,

Whose fiery steeds ill brooked the
stay

Of the steep street and crowded
way.

But in the train you might dis-
cern

Dark lowering brow and visage
stern ; 600

There nobles mourned their pride
restrained,

And the mean burgher's joys dis-
dained ;

And chiefs, who, hostage for their
clan,

Were each from home a banished
man,

There thought upon their own
gray tower,

Their waving woods, their feudal
power,

And deemed themselves a shame-
ful part

Of pageant which they cursed in
heart.

XXII

Now, in the Castle-park, drew out
Their checkered bands the joyous
rout. 610

There morricers, with bell at heel
And blade in hand, their mazes
wheel ;

But chief, beside the butts, there
stand

Bold Robin Hood and all his
band,—

Friar Tuck with quarterstaff and
cowl,

Old Scathelocke with his surly
scowl,

Maid Marian, fair as ivory bone,

Scarlet, and Mutch, and Little
John;

Their bugles challenge all that
will,

In archery to prove their skill. 620

The Douglas bent a bow of
might, —

His first shaft centred in the white,
And when in turn he shot again,
His second split the first in twain.
From the King's hand must Doug-
las take

A silver dart, the archer's stake;
Fondly he watched, with watery
eye,

Some answering glance of sym-
pathy, —

No kind emotion made reply!
Indifferent as to archer wight, 630

The monarch gave the arrow
bright.

XXIII

Now, clear the ring! for, hand to
hand,

The manly wrestlers take their
stand.

Two o'er the rest superior rose,
And proud demanded mightier
foes, —

Nor called in vain, for Douglas
came. —

For life is Hugh of Larbert lame;
Scarce better John of Alloa's fare,
Whom senseless home his com-
rades bare.

Prize of the wrestling match, the
King 640

To Douglas gave a golden ring,
While coldly glanced his eye of
blue,

As frozen drop of wintry dew.
Douglas would speak, but in his
breast

His struggling soul his words sup-
pressed:

Indignant then he turned him
where

Their arms the brawny yeomen
bare,

To hurl the massive bar in air.

When each his utmost strength
had shown,

The Douglas rent an earth-fast
stone 650

From its deep bed, then heaved it
high,

And sent the fragment through
the sky

A rood beyond the farthest mark.
And still in Stirling's royal park,
The gray-haired sires, who know
the past,

To strangers point the Douglas
cast,

And moralize on the decay
Of Scottish strength in modern
day.

XXIV

The vale with loud applauses
rang,

The Ladies' Rock sent back the
clang. 660

The King, with look unmoved, be-
stowed

A purse well filled with pieces
broad.

Indignant smiled the Douglas
proud,

And threw the gold among the
crowd,

Who now with anxious wonder
scan,

And sharper glance, the dark gray
man;

Till whispers rose among the
throng,

That heart so free, and hand so
strong,

Must to the Douglas blood be-
long.

The old men marked and shook
the head, 670

To see his hair with silver spread;
And winked aside, and told each
son

Of feats upon the English done,
Ere Douglas of the stalwart hand

Was exiled from his native land.
The women praised his stately
form,

Though wrecked by many a win-
 ter's storm;
 The youth with awe and wonder
 saw
 His strength surpassing Nature's
 law.
 Thus judged, as is their wont, the
 crowd, 680
 Till murmurs rose to clamors
 loud.
 But not a glance from that proud
 ring
 Of peers who circled round the
 King
 With Douglas held communion
 kind,
 Or called the banished man to
 mind;
 No, not from those who at the
 chase
 Once held his side the honored
 place,
 Begirt his board, and in the field
 Found safety underneath his
 shield;
 For he whom royal eyes dis-
 own, 690
 When was his form to courtiers
 known!

XXV

The Monarch saw the gambols
 flag,
 And bade let loose a gallant stag,
 Whose pride, the holiday to
 crown,
 Two favorite greyhounds should
 pull down,
 That venison free and Bourdeaux
 wine
 Might serve the archery to dine.
 But Lufra, — whom from Douglas'
 side
 Nor bribe nor threat could e'er
 divide,
 The fleetest hound in all the
 North, — 700
 Brave Lufra saw, and darted
 forth.
 She left the royal hounds midway,
 And dashing on the antlered prey,

Sunk her sharp muzzle in his
 flank,
 And deep the flowing life-blood
 drank.
 The king's stout huntsman saw
 the sport
 By strange intruder broken short,
 Came up, and with his leash un-
 bound
 In anger struck the noble hound.
 The Douglas had endured, that
 morn, 710
 The King's cold look, the nobles'
 scorn,
 And last, and worst to spirit proud,
 Had borne the pity of the crowd;
 But Lufra had been fondly bred,
 To share his board, to watch his
 bed,
 And oft would Ellen Lufra's neck
 In maiden glee with garlands
 deck;
 They were such playmates that
 with name
 Of Lufra Ellen's image came.
 His stifled wrath is brimming
 high, 720
 In darkened brow and flashing
 eye;

As waves before the bark divide,
 The crowd gave way before his
 stride;
 Needs but a buffet and no more,
 The groom lies senseless in his
 gore.
 Such blow no other hand could
 deal,
 Though gauntleted in glove of
 steel.

XXVI

Then clamored loud the royal
 train,
 And brandished swords and staves
 amain,
 But stern the Baron's warning:
 'Back! 730
 Back, on your lives, ye menial
 pack!
 Beware the Douglas. — Yes! be-
 hold,

King James! The Douglas, doomed
of old,
And vainly sought for near and
far,
A victim to atone the war,
A willing victim, now attends,
Nor craves thy grace but for his
friends.' —

'Thus is my clemency repaid?
Presumptuous Lord!' the Mon-
arch said; 739
'Of thy misproud ambitious clan,
Thou, James of Bothwell, wert the
man,
The only man, in whom a foe
My woman-mercy would not
know;
But shall a Monarch's presence
brook
Injurious blow and haughty
look? —
What ho! the Captain of our
Guard!
Give the offender fitting ward. —
Break off the sports!' — for tu-
mult rose,
And yeomen 'gan to bend their
bows, —
'Break off the sports!' he said
and frowned, 750
'And bid our horsemen clear the
ground.'

XXVII

Then uproar wild and misarray
Marred the fair form of festal
day.
The horsemen pricked among the
crowd,
Repelled by threats and insult
loud;
To earth are borne the old and
weak,
The timorous fly, the women
shriek;
With flint, with shaft, with staff,
with bar,
The harder urge tumultuous war.
At once round Douglas darkly
sweep 760
The royal spears in circle deep,

And slowly scale the pathway
steep,
While on the rear in thunder pour
The rabble with disordered roar.
With grief the noble Douglas saw
The Commons rise against the
law,
And to the leading soldier said:
'Sir John of Hyndford, 't was my
blade,
That knighthood on thy shoulder
laid;
For that good deed permit me
then 770
A word with these misguided
men. —

XXVIII

'Hear, gentle friends, ere yet for
me
Ye break the bands of fealty.
My life, my honor, and my cause,
I tender free to Scotland's laws.
Are these so weak as must re-
quire
The aid of your misguided ire?
Or if I suffer causeless wrong,
Is then my selfish rage so strong,
My sense of public weal so low, 780
That, for mean vengeance on a
foe,
Those cords of love I should un-
bind
Which knit my country and my
kind?
O no! Believe, in yonder tower
It will not soothe my captive
hour,
To know those spears, our foes
should dread
For me in kindred gore are red:
To know, in fruitless brawl be-
gun,
For me that mother wails her son,
For me that widow's mate ex-
pires, 790
For me that orphans weep their
sires,
That patriots mourn insulted laws,
And curse the Douglas for the
cause.

O let your patience ward such
ill,
And keep your right to love me
still!'

XXIX

The crowd's wild fury sunk again
In tears, as tempests melt in rain.
With lifted hands and eyes, they
prayed
For blessings on his generous
head
Who for his country felt alone, 800
And prized her blood beyond his
own.

Old men upon the verge of life
Blessed him who stayed the civil
strife;
And mothers held their babes on
high,

The self-devoted Chief to spy,
Triumphant over wrongs and ire,
To whom the prattlers owed a sire.
Even the rough soldier's heart was
moved;

As if behind some bier beloved,
With trailing arms and drooping
head, 810

The Douglas up the hill he led,
And at the Castle's battled verge,
With sighs resigned his honored
charge.

XXX

The offended Monarch rode apart,
With bitter thought and swelling
heart,
And would not now vouchsafe
again
Through Stirling streets to lead
his train.

'O Lennox, who would wish to rule
This changeling crowd, this com-
mon fool?

Hear'st thou,' he said, 'the loud ac-
claim 820

With which they shout the Doug-
las name?

With like acclaim the vulgar
throat

Strained for King James their
morning note;

With like acclaim they hailed the
day

When first I broke the Douglas
sway;

And like acclaim would Douglas
greet

If he could hurl me from my seat.
Who o'er the herd would wish to
reign, 828

Fantastic, fickle, fierce, and vain?
Vain as the leaf upon the stream,
And fickle as a changeful dream;
Fantastic as a woman's mood,
And fierce as Frenzy's fevered
blood:

Thou many-headed monster-thing,
O who would wish to be thy
king? —

XXXI

'But soft! what messenger of
speed

Spurs hitherward his panting
steed?

I guess his cognizance afar —

What from our cousin, John of
Mar?'

'He prays, my liege, your sports
keep bound 840

Within the safe and guarded
ground;

For some foul purpose yet un-
known, —

Most sure for evil to the throne, —
The outlawed Chieftain, Roderick
Dhu,

Has summoned his rebellious
crew;

'T is said, in James of Bothwell's
aid

These loose banditti stand ar-
rayed.

The Earl of Mar this morn from
Doune

To break their muster marched,
and soon

Your Grace will hear of battle
fought; 850

But earnestly the Earl besought,
Till for such danger he provide,
With scanty train you will not
ride.'

XXXII

'Thou warn'st me I have done
amiss, —

I should have earlier looked to
this;

I lost it in this bustling day. —

Retrace with speed thy former
way;

Spare not for spoiling of thy steed,
The best of mine shall be thy
need.

Say to our faithful Lord of Mar, 860

We do forbid the intended war;

Roderick this morn in single fight
Was made our prisoner by a
knight,

And Douglas hath himself and
cause

Submitted to our kingdom's laws.

The tidings of their leaders lost

Will soon dissolve the mountain
host,

Nor would we that the vulgar feel,
For their Chief's crimes, avenging
steel. 869

Bear Mar our message, Braco, fly!

He turned his steed, — 'My liege,
I hie,

Yet ere I cross this lily lawn

I fear the broadswords will be
drawn.'

The turf the flying courser
spurned,

And to his towers the King re-
turned.

XXXIII

Ill with King James's mood that
day

Suited gay feast and minstrel lay;
Soon were dismissed the courtly
throne, 878

And soon cut short the festal song.
Nor less upon the saddened town

The evening sunk in sorrow down.
The burghers spoke of civil jar,

Of rumored feuds and mountain
war,

Of Moray, Mar, and Roderick Dhu,
All up in arms; — the Douglas

too,

They mourned him pent within the
hold,

'Where stout Earl William was
of old.' —

And there his word the speaker
stayed,

And finger on his lip he laid,

Or pointed to his dagger blade. 890

But jaded horsemen from the west

At evening to the Castle pressed,

And busy talkers said they bore

Tidings of fight on Katrine's shore;

At noon the deadly fray begun,

And lasted till the set of sun.

Thus giddy rumor shook the town,

Till closed the Night her pennons
brown.

CANTO SIXTH

THE GUARD-ROOM

I.

THE sun, awakening, through the
smoky air

Of the dark city casts a sullen
glance,

Rousing each caitiff to his task of
care,

Of sinful man the sad inheri-
tance;

Summoning revellers from the
lagging dance,

Scaring the prowling robber to
his den;

Gilding on battled tower the ward-
er's lance,

And warning student pale to
leave his pen,

And yield his drowsy eyes to the
kind nurse of men.

What various scenes, and O, what
scenes of woe, 90

Are witnessed by that red and
struggling beam!

The fevered patient, from his pal-
let low,

Through crowded hospital be-
holds it stream;

The ruined maiden trembles at its gleam,
 The debtor wakes to thought of gyve and jail,
 The love-lorn wretch starts from tormenting dream;
 The wakeful mother, by the glimmering pale,
 Trims her sick infant's couch, and soothes his feeble wail.

II

At dawn the towers of Stirling rang
 With soldier-step and weapon-clang,
 While drums with rolling note foretell
 Relief to weary sentinel.
 Through narrow loop and casement barred,
 The sunbeams sought the Court of Guard,
 And, struggling with the smoky air,
 Deadened the torches' yellow glare.
 In comfortless alliance shone
 The lights through arch of blackened stone,
 And showed wild shapes in garb of war,
 Faces deformed with beard and scar,
 All haggard from the midnight watch,
 And fevered with the stern debauch;
 For the oak table's massive board,
 Flooded with wine, with fragments stored,
 And beakers drained, and cups o'erthrown,
 Showed in what sport the night had flown.
 Some, weary, snored on floor and bench;
 Some labored still their thirst to quench;
 Some, chilled with watching, spread their hands

O'er the huge chimney's dying brands,
 While round them, or beside them flung,
 At every step their harness rung.

III

These drew not for their fields the sword,
 Like tenants of a feudal lord,
 Nor owned the patriarchal claim
 Of Chieftain in their leader's name;
 Adventurers they, from far who roved,
 To live by battle which they loved.
 There the Italian's clouded face,
 The swarthy Spaniard's there you trace;
 The mountain-loving Switzer there
 More freely breathed in mountain-air;
 The Fleming there despised the soil
 That paid so ill the laborer's toil;
 Their rolls showed French and German name;
 And merry England's exiles came,
 To share, with ill-concealed disdain,
 Of Scotland's pay the scanty gain.
 All brave in arms, well trained to wield
 The heavy halberd, brand, and shield;
 In camps licentious, wild, and bold;
 In pillage fierce and uncontrolled
 And now, by holytide and feast,
 From rules of discipline released.

IV

They held debate of bloody fray,
 Fought 'twixt Loch Katrine and Achray.
 Fierce was their speech, and mid their words
 Their hands oft grappled to their swords;
 Nor sunk their tone to spare the ear

Of wounded comrades groaning
near, ⁷⁰
Whose mangled limbs and bodies
gored
Bore token of the mountain sword,
Though, neighboring to the Court
of Guard,
Their prayers and feverish wails
were heard, —

Sad burden to the ruffian joke,
And savage oath by fury spoke! —
At length up started John of
Brent,
A yeoman from the banks of
Trent;

A stranger to respect or fear,
In peace a chaser of the deer, ⁸⁰
In host a hardy mutineer,
But still the boldest of the crew
When deed of danger was to do.
He grieved that day their games
cut short,

And marred the dicer's brawling
sport,
And shouted loud, 'Renew the
bowl!

And, while a merry catch I troll,
Let each the buxom chorus bear,
Like brethren of the brand and
spear.'

V

SOLDIER'S SONG

Our vicar still preaches that Peter
and Poule ⁹⁰
Laid a swinging long curse on the
bonny brown bowl,
That there 's wrath and despair in
the jolly black-jack,
And the seven deadly sins in a
flagon of sack;
Yet whoop, Barnaby! off with thy
liquor,
Drink upsees out, and a fig for the
vicar!

Our vicar he calls it damnation to
sip
The ripe ruddy dew of a woman's
dear lip,

Says that Beelzebub lurks in her
kerchief so sly,
And Apollyon shoots darts from
her merry black eye;
Yet whoop, Jack! kiss Gillian the
quicker, ¹⁰⁰
Till she bloom like a rose, and a
fig for the vicar!

Our vicar thus preaches, — and
why should he not?
For the dues of his cure are the
placket and pot;
And 't is right of his office poor
laymen to lurch
Who infringe the domains of our
good Mother Church.
Yet whoop, bully-boys! off with
your liquor,
Sweet Marjorie 's the word, and a
fig for the vicar!

VI

The warder's challenge, heard
without,
Stayed in mid-roar the merry
shout.
A soldier to the portal went, — ¹¹⁰
'Here is old Bertram, sirs, of
Ghent;
And — beat for jubilee the drum! —
A maid and minstrel with him
come.'
Bertram, a Fleming, gray and
scarred,
Was entering now the Court of
Guard,
A harper with him, and, in plaid
All muffled close, a mountain
maid,
Who backward shrunk to 'scape
the view
Of the loose scene and boisterous
crew.
'What news?' they roared: — 'I
only know, ¹²⁰
From noon till eve we fought with
foe,
As wild and as untamable
As the rude mountains where they
dwell;

On both sides store of blood is
lost,
Nor much success can either
boast.'—

'But whence thy captives, friend?
such spoil

As theirs must needs reward thy
toil.

Old dost thou wax, and wars grow
sharp;

Thou now hast glee-maiden and
harp!

Get thee an ape, and trudge the
land, 130

The leader of a juggler band.'

VII

'No, comrade;—no such fortune
mine.

After the fight these sought our
line,

That aged harper and the girl,
And, having audience of the Earl,

Mar bade I should purvey them
steed,

And bring them hitherward with
speed.

Forbear your mirth and rude
alarm,

For none shall do them shame or
harm.—'

'Hear ye his boast?' cried John
of Brent, 140

Ever to strife and jangling bent;

'Shall he strike doe beside our
lodge,

And yet the jealous niggard grudge
To pay the forester his fee?

I'll have my share howe'er it
be,

Despite of Moray, Mar, or thee.'

Bertram his forward step with-
stood;

And, burning in his vengeful mood,
Old Allan, though unfit for strife,

Laid hand upon his dagger-knife;
But Ellen boldly stepped between,

And dropped at once the tartan
screen:— 152

So, from his morning cloud, ap-
pears

The sun of May through summer
tears.

The savage soldiery, amazed,
As on descended angel gazed;

Even hardy Brent, abashed and
tamed,

Stood half admiring, half ashamed.

VIII

Boldly she spoke: 'Soldiers, at-
tend!

My father was the soldier's friend,
Cheered him in camps, in marches

led, 161
And with him in the battle bled.

Not from the valiant or the strong
Should exile's daughter suffer
wrong.'

Answered De Brent, most forward
still

In every feat or good or ill:

'I shame me of the part I played;
And thou an outlaw's child, poor
maid!

An outlaw I by forest laws,
And merry Needwood knows the

cause. 170

Poor Rose,—if Rose be living
now,'—

He wiped his iron eye and brow,—
'Must bear such age, I think, as
thou.—

Hear ye, my mates! I go to call
The Captain of our watch to hall:

There lies my halberd on the floor;
And he that steps my halberd

o'er,
To do the maid injurious part,

My shaft shall quiver in his heart!
Beware loose speech, or jesting

rough; 180

Ye all know John de Brent.
Enough.'

IX

Their Captain came, a gallant
young,—

Of Tullibardine's house he
sprung,—

Nor wore he yet the spurs of
knight;

Gay was his mien, his humor
light,
And, though by courtesy controlled,
Forward his speech, his bearing
bold.
The high-born maiden ill could
brook
The scanning of his curious look
And dauntless eye:—and yet, in
sooth, 190
Young Lewis was a generous
youth;
But Ellen's lovely face and mien,
Ill suited to the garb and scene,
Might lightly bear construction
strange,
And give loose fancy scope to
range.
'Welcome to Stirling towers, fair
maid!
Come ye to seek a champion's aid,
On palfrey white, with harper
hoar,
Like errant damosel of yore?
Does thy high quest a knight re-
quire, 200
Or may the venture suit a squire?'
Her dark eye flashed:—she
paused and sighed:—
'O what have I to do with pride!—
Through scenes of sorrow, shame,
and strife,
A suppliant for a father's life,
I crave an audience of the King
Behold, to back my suit, a ring,
The royal pledge of grateful
claims,
Given by the Monarch to Fitz-
James.'

X

The signet-ring young Lewis took
With deep respect and altered
look, 211
And said: 'This ring our duties
own;
And pardon, if to worth unknown,
In semblance mean obscurely
veiled,
Lady, in aught my folly failed.

Soon as the day flings wide his
gates,
The King shall know what suitor
waits.
Please you meanwhile in fitting
bower
Repose you till his waking hour;
Female attendance shall obey 220
Your hest, for service or array.
Permit I marshal you the way.'
But, ere she followed, with the
grace
And open bounty of her race,
She bade her slender purse be
shared
Among the soldiers of the guard.
The rest with thanks their guerdon
took,
But Brent, with shy and awkward
look,
On the reluctant maiden's hold
Forced bluntly back the proffered
gold: 230
'Forgive a haughty English heart,
And O, forget its ruder part!
The vacant purse shall be my
share,
Which in my barret-cap I'll bear,
Perchance, in jeopardy of war,
Where gayer crests may keep
afar.'
With thanks—'t was all she could
—the maid
His rugged courtesies repaid.

XI

When Ellen forth with Lewis went,
Allan made suit to John of
Brent:— 240
'My lady safe, O let your grace
Give me to see my master's face!
His minstrel I,—to share his doom
Bound from the cradle to the
tomb.
Tenth in descent, since first my
sires
Waked for his noble house their
lyres,
Nor one of all the race was known
But prized its weal above their
own.

With the Chief's birth begins our
care;
Our harp must soothe the infant
leir, 250
Teach the youth tales of fight, and
grace
His earliest feat of field or chase;
In peace, in war, our rank we
keep,
We cheer his board, we soothe his
sleep,
Nor leave him till we pour our
verse —
A doleful tribute! — o'er his
hearse.
Then let me share his captive lot;
It is my right, — deny it not!
'Little we reckon,' said John of
Brent,
'We Southern men, of long de-
scent; 260
Nor wot we how a name — a
word —
Makes clansmen vassals to a lord:
Yet kind my noble landlord's
part, —
God bless the house of Beaude-
sert!
And, but I loved to drive the deer
More than to guide the laboring
steer,
I had not dwelt an outcast here.
Come, good old Minstrel, follow
me;
Thy Lord and Chieftain shalt thou
see.'

XII

Then, from a rusted iron hook, 270
A bunch of ponderous keys he
took,
Lighted a torch, and Allan led
Through grated arch and passage
dread.
Portals they passed, where, deep
within,
Spoke prisoner's moan and fetters'
din;
Through rugged vaults, where,
loosely stored,
Lay wheel, and axe, and heads-
man's sword,

And many a hideous engine grim,
For wrenching joint and crushing
limb,
By artists formed who deemed it
shame 280
And sin to give their work a name.
They halted at a low-browed porch,
And Brent to Allan gave the torch,
While bolt and chain he backward
rolled,
And made the bar unhasp its hold.
They entered: — 't was a prison-
room
Of stern security and gloom,
Yet not a dungeon; for the day
Through lofty gratings found its
way, 289
And rude and antique garniture
Decked the sad walls and oaken
floor,
Such as the rugged days of old
Deemed fit for captive noble's hold.
'Here,' said De Brent, 'thou mayst
remain
Till the Leech visit him again.
Strict is his charge, the warders
tell,
To tend the noble prisoner well.'
Retiring then the bolt he drew,
And the lock's murmurs growled
anew.
Roused at the sound, from lowly
bed 300
A captive feebly raised his head;
The wondering Minstrel looked,
and knew —
Not his dear lord, but Roderick
Dhu!
For, come from where Clan-Alpine
fought,
They, erring, deemed the Chief he
sought.

XIII

As the tall ship, whose lofty prore
Shall never stem the billows more,
Deserted by her gallant band, 308
Amid the breakers lies astrand, —
So on his couch lay Roderick Dhu!
And oft his fevered limbs he threw
In toss abrupt, as when her sides

Lie rocking in the advancing tides,
 That shake her frame with cease-
 less beat,
 Yet cannot heave her from her
 seat;—
 O, how unlike her course at sea!
 Or his free step on hill and lea!—
 Soon as the Minstrel he could
 scan,—
 'What of thy lady?—of my
 clan?—
 My mother?—Douglas?—tell me
 all! 320
 Have they been ruined in my fall?
 Ah, yes! or wherefore art thou
 here?
 Yet speak,—speak boldly,—do
 not fear.'
 For Allan, who his mood well
 knew,
 Was choked with grief and terror
 too.
 'Who fought?—who fled?—Old
 man, be brief;—
 Some might,—for they had lost
 their Chief.
 Who basely live?—who bravely
 died?'
 'O, calm thee, Chief!' the Minstrel
 cried,
 'Ellen is safe!' 'For that thank
 Heaven!' 330
 'And hopes are for the Douglas
 given;—
 The Lady Margaret, too, is well;
 And, for thy clan,—on field or fell,
 Has never harp of minstrel told
 Of combat fought so true and bold.
 Thy stately Pine is yet unbent,
 Though many a goodly bough is
 rent.'

XIV

The Chieftain reared his form on
 high,
 And fever's fire was in his eye;
 But ghastly, pale, and livid streaks
 Checkered his swarthy brow and
 cheeks. 341
 'Hark, Minstrel! I have heard
 thee play,

With measure bold on festal day,
 In yon lone isle,—again where
 ne'er
 Shall harper play or warrior
 hear!—
 That stirring air that peals on
 high,
 O'er Dermid's race our victory.—
 Strike it!—and then,—for well
 thou canst,—
 Free from thy minstrel-spirit
 glanced, 349
 Fling me the picture of the fight,
 When met my clan the Saxon
 might.
 I'll listen, till my fancy hears
 The clang of swords, the crash of
 spears!
 These grates, these walls, shall
 vanish then
 For the fair field of fighting men,
 And my free spirit burst away,
 As if it soared from battle fray.'
 The trembling Bard with awe
 obeyed,—
 Slow on the harp his hand he laid;
 But soon remembrance of the
 sight 360
 He witnessed from the mountain's
 height,
 With what old Bertram told at
 night,
 Awakened the full power of song,
 And bore him in career along;—
 As shallop launched on river's
 tide,
 That slow and fearful leaves the
 side,
 But, when it feels the middle
 stream,
 Drives downward swift as light-
 ning's beam.

XV

BATTLE OF BEAL' AN DUINE

'The Minstrel came once more to
 view 369
 The eastern ridge of Benvenue,
 For ere he parted he would say

Farewell to lovely Loch Achray —
Where shall he find, in foreign
land,

So lone a lake, so sweet a
strand! —

There is no breeze upon the
fern,

No ripple on the lake,

Upon her eyry nods the erne,

The deer has sought the brake;

The small birds will not sing
aloud, 379

The springing trout lies still,

So darkly glooms yon thunder-
cloud,

That swathes, as with a purple
shroud,

Benledi's distant bill.

Is it the thunder's solemn sound

That mutters deep and dread,

Or echoes from the groaning
ground

The warrior's measured tread?

Is it the lightning's quivering
glance

That on the thicket streams,

Or do they flash on spear and
lance 390

The sun's retiring beams? —

I see the dagger-crest of Mar,

I see the Moray's silver star,

Wave o'er the cloud of Saxon
war,

That up the lake comes winding
far!

To hero boune for battle-strife,

Or bard of martial lay,

'T were worth ten years of
peaceful life,

One glance at their array!

XVI

'Their light-armed archers far
and near 400

Surveyed the tangled ground,

Their centre ranks, with pike
and spear,

A twilight forest frowned,

Their barded horsemen in the
rear

The stern battalia crowned.

No cymbal clashed, no clarion
rang,

Still were the pipe and drum;
Save heavy tread, and armor's
clang,

The sullen march was dumb.
There breathed no wind their
crests to shake, 410

Or wave their flags abroad;
Scarce the frail aspen seemed
to quake,

That shadowed o'er their road.
Their vaward scouts no tidings
bring,

Can rouse no lurking foe,
Nor spy a trace of living thing,
Save when they stirred the
roe;

The host moves like a deep-sea
wave,

Where rise no rocks its pride to
brave,

High-swelling, dark, and slow,
The lake is passed, and now they
gain 421

A narrow and a broken plain,
Before the Trosachs' rugged jaws;
And here the horse and spear-
men pause,

While, to explore the dangerous
glen,

Dive through the pass the archer-
men.

XVII

'At once there rose so wild a yell
Within that dark and narrow dell,
As all the fiends from heaven that
fell 429

Had pealed the banner-cry of hell!
Forth from the pass in tumult
driven,

Like chaff before the wind of
heaven,

The archery appear:

For life! for life! their flight
they ply —

And shriek, and shout, and bat-
tle-cry,

And plaids and bonnets waving
high,

And broadswords flashing to the
sky,

Are maddening in the rear.

Onward they drive in dreadful
race,

Pursuers and pursued ; 440
Before that tide of flight and
chase,

How shall it keep its rooted
place,

The spearmen's twilight
wood?—

"Down, down," cried Mar, "your
lances down!

Bear back both friend and
foe!"—

Like reeds before the tempest's
frown,

That serried grove of lances
brown

At once lay levelled low ;

And closely shouldering side to
side,

The bristling ranks the onset
bide.— 450

"We'll quell the savage moun-
taineer,

As their Tinchel cows the
game!

They come as fleet as forest
deer,

We'll drive them back as
tame."

XVIII

'Bearing before them in their
course

The relics of the archer force,
Like wave with crest of sparkling
foam,

Right onward did Clan-Alpine
come.

Above the tide, each broadsword
bright

Was brandishing like beam of
light, 460

Each targe was dark below ;
And with the ocean's mighty
swing,

When heaving to the tempest's
wing,

They hurled them on the foe.

I heard the lance's shivering crash,
As when the whirlwind rends the
ash ;

I heard the broadsword's deadly
clang,

As if a hundred anvils rang !

But Moray wheeled his rearward
rank

Of horsemen on Clan-Alpine's
flank,— 470

"My banner-men, advance !

I see," he cried, "their column
shake.

Now, gallants ! for your ladies'
sake,

Upon them with the lance !"—

The horsemen dashed among
the rout,

As deer break through the
broom ;

Their steeds are stout, their
swords are out,

They soon make lightsome
room.

Clan-Alpine's best are backward
borne—

Where, where was Roderick
then ! 480

One blast upon his bugle-horn

Were worth a thousand men.

And reflux through the pass
of fear

The battle's tide was poured ;

Vanished the Saxon's struggling
spear,

Vanished the mountain-sword.

As Bracklinn's chasm, so black
and steep,

Receives her roaring linn,

As the dark caverns of the deep
Suck the wild whirlpool in, 490

So did the deep and darksome pass
Devour the battle's mingled mass ;

None linger now upon the plain,
Save those who ne'er shall fight
again.

XIX

'Now westward rolls the battle's
din,

That deep and doubling pass with-
in. —

Minstrel, away! the work of fate
Is bearing on; its issue wait,
Where the rude Trosachs' dread
defile

499

Opens on Katrine's lake and isle.
Gray Benvenue I soon repassed,
Loch Katrine lay beneath me cast.

The sun is set; — the clouds are
met,
The lowering scowl of heaven
An inky hue of livid blue
To the deep lake has given;
Strange gusts of wind from moun-
tain glen

Swept o'er the lake, then sunk
again.

I heeded not the eddying surge,
Mine eye but saw the Trosachs'
gorge,

510

Mine ear but heard that sullen
sound,

Which like an earthquake shook
the ground,

And spoke the stern and desperate
strife

That parts not but with parting
life,

Seeming, to minstrel ear, to toll
The dirge of many a passing
soul.

Nearer it comes — the dim wood-
glen

The martial flood disgorged
again,

But not in mingled tide;
The plaided warriors of the
North

520

High on the mountain thunder
forth

And overhang its side,
While by the lake below appears
The darkening cloud of Saxon
spears.

At weary bay each shattered
band,

Eying their foemen, sternly
stand;

Their banners stream like tat-
tered sail,

That flings its fragments to the
gale,

And broken arms and disarray
Marked the fell havoc of the
day.

530

XX

'Viewing the mountain's ridge
askance,

The Saxons stood in sullen trance,
Till Moray pointed with his lance,
And cried: "Behold yon isle! —
See! none are left to guard its
strand

But women weak, that wring the
hand:

'T is there of yore the robber band
Their booty wont to pile; —

My purse, with bonnet-pieces
store,

539

To him will swim a bow-shot
o'er,

And loose a shallop from the
shore.

Lightly we'll tame the war-wolf
then,

Lords of his mate, and brood, and
den."

Forth from the ranks a spearman
sprung,

On earth his casque and corselet
rung,

He plunged him in the wave: —
All saw the deed, — the purpose
knew,

And to their clamors Benvenue
A mingled echo gave;

The Saxons shout, their mate to
cheer,

550

The helpless females scream for
fear,

And yells for rage the mountain-
eer.

'T was then, as by the outcry
riven,

Poured down at once the lowering
heaven:

A whirlwind swept Loch Katrine's
breast,

Her billows reared their snowy
crest.

Well for the swimmer swelled they
 high,
 To mar the Highland marksman's
 eye;
 For round him showered, mid rain
 and hail,
 The vengeful arrows of the Gael.
 In vain. — He nears the isle — and
 lo! 561
 His hand is on a shallop's bow.
 Just then a flash of lightning
 came,
 It tinged the waves and strand
 with flame:
 I marked Duncraggan's widowed
 dame,
 Behind an oak I saw her stand,
 A naked dirk gleamed in her
 hand: —
 It darkened, — but amid the moan
 Of waves I heard a dying groan; —
 Another flash! — the spearman
 floats 570
 A weltering corse beside the boats,
 And the stern matron o'er him
 stood,
 Her hand and dagger streaming
 blood.

XXI

"Revenge! revenge!" the Saxons
 cried,
 The Gaels' exulting shout replied.
 Despite the elemental rage,
 Again they hurried to engage;
 But, ere they closed in desperate
 fight,
 Bloody with spurring came a
 knight,
 Sprung from his horse, and from
 a crag 580
 Waved 'twixt the hosts a milk-
 white flag.
 Clarion and trumpet by his side
 Rung forth a truce-note high and
 wide,
 While, in the Monarch's name,
 afar
 A herald's voice forbade the war,
 For Bothwell's lord and Roderick
 bold

Were both, he said, in captive
 hold,' —
 But here the lay made sudden
 stand,
 The harp escaped the Minstrel's
 hand!
 Oft had he stolen a glance, to
 spy 590
 How Roderick brooked his min-
 strelsy:
 At first, the Chieftain, to the
 chime,
 With lifted hand kept feeble
 time;
 That motion ceased, — yet feeling
 strong
 Varied his look as changed the
 song;
 At length, no more his deafened
 ear
 The minstrel melody can hear;
 His face grows sharp, — his hands
 are clenched,
 As if some pang his heart-strings
 wrenched;
 Set are his teeth, his fading
 eye 600
 Is sternly fixed on vacancy;
 Thus, motionless and moanless,
 drew
 His parting breath stout Roderick
 Dhu! —
 Old Allan-bane looked on aghast,
 While grim and still his spirit
 passed;
 But when he saw that life was
 fled,
 He poured his wailing o'er the
 dead.

XXII

LAMENT

'And art thou cold and lowly
 laid,
 Thy foeman's dread, thy people's
 aid,
 Breadalbane's boast, Clan-Alpine's
 shade! 610
 For thee shall none a requiem
 say? —

For thee, who loved the minstrel's
lay,
For thee, of Bothwell's house the
stay,
The shelter of her exiled line,
E'en in this prison-house of thine,
I'll wail for Alpine's honored
Pine!

'What groans shall yonder valleys
fill!
What shrieks of grief shall rend
yon hill!
What tears of burning rage shall
thrill,
When mourns thy tribe thy bat-
tles done, 620
Thy fall before the race was won,
Thy sword ungirt ere set of sun!
There breathes not clansman of
thy line,
But would have given his life for
thine.
O, woe for Alpine's honored Pine!

'Sad was thy lot on mortal
stage!—
The captive thrush may brook the
cage,
The prisoned eagle dies for rage.
Brave spirit, do not scorn my
strain!
And, when its notes awake
again, 630
Even she, so long beloved in vain,
Shall with my harp her voice com-
bine,
And mix her woe and tears with
mine,
To wail Clan-Alpine's honored
Pine.'

XXIII

Ellen, the while, with bursting
heart,
Remained in lordly bower apart,
Where played, with many-colored
gleams,
Through storied pane the rising
beams.
In vain on gilded roof they fall,

And lightened up a tapestried
wall, 640
And for her use a menial train
A rich collation spread in vain.
The banquet proud, the chamber
gay,
Scarce drew one curious glance
astray;
Or if she looked, 't was but to say,
With better omen dawned the day
In that lone isle, where waved on
high
The dun-deer's hide for canopy;
Where oft her noble father shared
The simple meal her care pre-
pared, 650
While Lufra, crouching by her
side,
Her station claimed with jealous
pride,
And Douglas, bent on woodland
game,
Spoke of the chase to Malcolm
Græme,
Whose answer, oft at random
made,
The wandering of his thoughts be-
trayed.
Those who such simple joys have
known
Are taught to prize them when
they're gone.
But sudden, see, she lifts her head,
The window seeks with cautious
tread. 660
What distant music has the power
To win her in this woful hour?
'T was from a turret that o'er-
hung
Her latticed bower, the strain was
sung.

XXIV

LAY OF THE IMPRISONED
HUNTSMAN

'My hawk is tired of perch and
hood,
My idle greyhound loathes his
food,
My horse is weary of his stall,

And I am sick of captive thrall.
 I wish I were as I have been,
 Hunting the hart in forest green,
 With bended bow and bloodhound
 free, 671
 For that 's the life is meet for me.

' I hate to learn the ebb of time
 From yon dull steeple's drowsy
 chime,
 Or mark it as the sunbeams crawl,
 Inch after inch, along the wall.
 The lark was wont my matins
 ring,
 The sable rook my vespers sing,
 These towers, although a king's
 they be,
 Have not a hall of joy for me. 680

' No more at dawning morn I rise,
 And sun myself in Ellen's eyes,
 Drive the fleet deer the forest
 through,
 And homeward wend with evening
 dew ;
 A blithesome welcome blithely
 meet,
 And lay my trophies at her feet,
 While fled the eve on wing of
 glee, —
 That life is lost to love and me !'

XXV

The heart-sick lay was hardly
 said,
 The listener had not turned her
 head, 690
 It trickled still, the starting tear,
 When light a footstep struck her
 ear,
 And Snowdown's graceful Knight
 was near.
 She turned the hastier, lest again
 The prisoner should renew his
 strain.
 ' O welcome, brave Fitz-James !'
 she said ;
 ' How may an almost orphan maid
 Pay the deep debt ' — ' O say not
 so !
 To me no gratitude you owe.

Not mine, alas ! the boon to give,
 And bid thy noble father live ; 701
 I can but be thy guide, sweet
 maid,
 With Scotland's King thy suit to
 aid.
 No tyrant he, though ire and pride
 May lay his better mood aside.
 Come, Ellen, come ! 't is more than
 time,
 He holds his court at morning
 prime.'
 With beating heart, and bosom
 wrung,
 As to a brother's arm she clung.
 Gently he dried the falling tear,
 And gently whispered hope and
 cheer ; 711
 Her faltering steps half led, half
 stayed,
 Through gallery fair and high ar-
 cade,
 Till at his touch its wings of pride
 A portal arch unfolded wide.

XXVI

Within 't was brilliant all and
 light,
 A thronging scene of figures
 bright ;
 It glowed on Ellen's dazzled sight,
 As when the setting sun has given
 Ten thousand hues to summer
 even, 720
 And from their tissue fancy frames
 Aerial knights and fairy dames.
 Still by Fitz-James her footing
 staid ;
 A few faint steps she forward
 made,
 Then slow her drooping head she
 raised,
 And fearful round the presence
 gazed ;
 For him she sought who owned
 this state,
 The dreaded Prince whose will
 was fate ! —
 She gazed on many a princely port
 Might well have ruled a royal
 court ; 730

On many a splendid garb she
 gazed, —
 Then turned bewildered and
 amazed,
 For all stood bare; and in the
 room
 Fitz-James alone wore cap and
 plume.
 To him each lady's look was lent,
 On him each courtier's eye was
 bent;
 Midst furs and silks and jewels
 sheen,
 He stood, in simple Lincoln green,
 The centre of the glittering ring, —
 And Snowdown's Knight is Scot-
 land's King! 740

XXVII

As wreath of snow on mountain-
 breast
 Slides from the rock that gave it
 rest,
 Poor Ellen glided from her stay,
 And at the Monarch's feet she
 lay;
 No word her choking voice com-
 mands.
 She showed the ring, — she clasped
 her hands.
 O, not a moment could he brook,
 The generous Prince, that sup-
 pliant look!
 Gently he raised her, — and, the
 while,
 Checked with a glance the circle's
 smile; 750
 Graceful, but grave, her brow he
 kissed,
 And bade her terrors be dis-
 missed: —
 'Yes, fair; the wandering poor
 Fitz-James
 The fealty of Scotland claims.
 To him thy woes, thy wishes,
 bring;
 He will redeem his signet ring,
 Ask naught for Douglas; — yester
 even,
 His Prince and he have much for-
 given;

Wrong hath he had from slander-
 ous tongue, 759
 I, from his rebel kinsmen, wrong.
 We would not, to the vulgar crowd,
 Yield what they craved with cla-
 mor loud;
 Calmly we heard and judged his
 cause,
 Our council aided and our laws.
 I stanch'd thy father's death-feud
 stern
 With stout De Vaux and gray
 Glencairn;
 And Bothwell's Lord henceforth
 we own
 The friend and bulwark of our
 throne. —
 But, lovely infidel, how now?
 What clouds thy misbelieving
 brow? 770
 Lord James of Douglas, lend thine
 aid;
 Thou must confirm this doubting
 maid.'

XXVIII

Then forth the noble Douglas
 sprung,
 And on his neck his daughter
 hung.
 The Monarch drank, that happy
 hour,
 The sweetest, holiest draught of
 Power, —
 When it can say with godlike
 voice,
 Arise, sad Virtue, and rejoice!
 Yet would not James the general
 eye
 On nature's raptures long should
 pry; 780
 He stepped between — 'Nay,
 Douglas, nay,
 Steal not my proselyte away!
 The riddle 't is my right to read,
 That brought this happy chance
 to speed.
 Yes, Ellen, when disguised I stray
 In life's more low but happier way,
 'T is under name which veils my
 power,

Nor falsely veils, — for Stirling's
 tower
 Of yore the name of Snowdoun
 claims,
 And Normans call me James Fitz-
 James. 790
 Thus watch I o'er insulted laws,
 Thus learn to right the injured
 cause.'
 Then, in a tone apart and low, —
 'Ah, little traitress! none must
 know
 What idle dream, what lighter
 thought,
 What vanity full dearly bought,
 Joined to thine eye's dark witch-
 craft, drew
 My spell-bound steps to Benve-
 nue
 In dangerous hour, and all but
 gave
 Thy Monarch's life to mountain
 glaive!' 800
 Aloud he spoke: 'Thou still dost
 hold
 That little talisman of gold,
 Pledge of my faith, Fitz-James's
 ring, —
 What seeks fair Ellen of the King?'

XXIX

Full well the conscious maiden
 guessed
 He probed the weakness of her
 breast;
 But with that consciousness there
 came
 A lightening of her fears for
 Græme,
 And more she deemed the Mon-
 arch's ire
 Kindled 'gainst him who for her
 sire 810
 Rebellious broadsword boldly
 drew;
 And, to her generous feeling
 true,
 She craved the grace of Roderick
 Dhu.

'Forbear thy suit; — the King of
 kings
 Alone can stay life's parting
 wings.
 I know his heart, I know his
 hand,
 Have shared his cheer, and proved
 his brand; —
 My fairest earldom would I give
 To bid Clan-Alpine's Chieftain
 live! — 819
 Hast thou no other boon to crave?
 No other captive friend to save?'
 Blushing, she turned her from the
 King,
 And to the Douglas gave the
 ring.
 As if she wished her sire to
 speak
 The suit that stained her glowing
 cheek.
 'Nay, then, my pledge has lost its
 force,
 And stubborn justice holds her
 course.
 Malcolm, come forth!' — and, at
 the word,
 Down kneeled the Græme to Scot-
 land's Lord.
 'For thee, rash youth, no suppliant
 sues, 830
 From thee may Vengeance claim
 her dues,
 Who, nurtured underneath our
 smile,
 Hast paid our care by treacherous
 wile,
 And sought amid thy faithful clan
 A refuge for an outlawed man,
 Dishonoring thus thy loyal name. —
 Fetters and warder for the
 Græme!'
 His chain of gold the King un-
 strung,
 The links o'er Malcolm's neck he
 flung,
 Then gently drew the glittering
 band, 840
 And laid the clasp on Ellen's hand.

HARP of the North, farewell! The hills grow dark,
On purple peaks a deeper shade descending;
In twilight copse the glow-worm lights her spark,
The deer, half-seen, are to the covert wending.
Resume thy wizard elm! the fountain lending,
And the wild breeze, thy wilder minstrelsy;
Thy numbers sweet with nature's vespers blending,
With distant echo from the fold and lea,
And herd-boy's evening pipe, and hum of housing bee. 850

Yet, once again, farewell, thou Minstrel Harp!
Yet, once again, forgive my feeble sway,
And little reck I of the censure sharp
May idly cavil at an idle lay.
Much have I owed thy strains on life's long way,
Through secret woes the world has never known,
When on the weary night dawned wearier day,
And bitterer was the grief devoured alone. —
That I o'erlive such woes, Enchantress! is thine own.

Hark! as my lingering footsteps slow retire, 860
Some Spirit of the Air has waked thy string!
'T is now a seraph bold, with touch of fire,
'T is now the brush of Fairy's frolic wing.
Receding now, the dying numbers ring
Fainter and fainter down the rugged dell;
And now the mountain breezes scarcely bring
A wandering witch-note of the distant spell —
And now 't is silent all! — Enchantress, fare thee well!

THE VISION OF DON RODERICK

*Quid dignum memorare tuis, Hispania, terris,
Vox humana valet ! — CLAUDIAN.*

TO

JOHN WHITMORE, ESQ.,

AND TO THE

COMMITTEE OF SUBSCRIBERS FOR RELIEF OF THE
PORTUGUESE SUFFERERS,

IN WHICH HE PRESIDES,

THIS POEM,

THE VISION OF DON RODERICK,

COMPOSED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE FUND UNDER THEIR
MANAGEMENT,

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED BY

WALTER SCOTT

INTRODUCTION

I

LIVES there a strain whose
sounds of mounting fire
May rise distinguished o'er the
din of war ;
Or died it with yon Master of
the Lyre,
Who sung beleaguered Ilion's
evil star ?
Such, WELLINGTON, might
reach thee from afar,
Wafting its descendant wide o'er
Ocean's range ;
Nor shouts, nor clashing arms,
its mood could mar,
All as it swelled 'twixt each
loud trumpet-change,
That clangs to Britain victory, to
Portugal revenge !

II

Yes ! such a strain, with all o'er-
powering measure, 10
Might melodize with each tu-
multuous sound,
Each voice of fear or triumph,
woe or pleasure,
That rings Mondego's ravaged
shores around ;
The thundering cry of hosts with
conquest crowned,
The female shriek, the ruined
peasant's moan,
The shout of captives from their
chains unbound,
The foiled oppressor's deep
and sullen groan,
A Nation's choral hymn for tyr-
anny o'erthrown.

III

But we, weak minstrels of a lag-
 gard day,
 Skilled but to imitate an elder
 page, 20
 Timid and raptureless, can we
 repay
 The debt thou claim'st in this
 exhausted age?
 Thou givest our lyres a theme,
 that might engage
 Those that could send thy
 name o'er sea and land,
 While sea and land shall last;
 for Homer's rage
 A theme; a theme for Milton's
 mighty hand—
 How much unmeet for us, a faint
 degenerate band!

IV

Ye mountains stern! within
 whose rugged breast
 The friends of Scottish free-
 dom found repose;
 Ye torrents! whose hoarse
 sounds have soothed their
 rest, 30
 Returning from the field of
 vanquished foes:
 Say, have ye lost each wild ma-
 jestic close,
 That erst the choir of Bards or
 Druids flung;
 What time their hymn of victory
 arose,
 And Cattrath's glens with
 voice of triumph rung,
 And mystic Merlin harped, and
 gray-haired Llywarch sung?

V

O, if your wilds such minstrelsy
 retain,
 As sure your changeful gales
 seem oft to say,
 When sweeping wild and sink-
 ing soft again,
 Like trumpet-jubilee or harp's
 wild sway; 40

If ye can echo such triumphant
 lay,
 Then lend the note to him has
 loved you long!
 Who pious gathered each tradi-
 tion gray,
 That floats your solitary
 wastes along,
 And with affection vain gave them
 new voice in song.

VI

For not till now, how oft soe'er
 the task
 Of truant verse hath lightened
 graver care,
 From Muse or Sylvan was he
 wont to ask,
 In phrase poetic, inspiration
 fair;
 Careless he gave his numbers to
 the air, 50
 They came unsought for, if
 applauses came;
 Nor for himself prefers he now
 the prayer:
 Let but his verse befit a hero's
 fame,
 Immortal be the verse!—forgot
 the poet's name!

VII

Hark, from yon misty cairn their
 answer tost:
 'Minstrel! the fame of whose
 romantic lyre,
 Capricious - swelling now, may
 soon be lost,
 Like the light flickering of a
 cottage fire;
 If to such task presumptuous
 thou aspire
 Seek not from us the meed to
 warrior due: 60
 Age after age has gathered son
 to sire,
 Since our gray cliffs the din of
 conflict knew,
 Or, pealing through our vales, vic-
 torious bugles blew.

VIII

'Decayed our old traditionary
lore,
Save where the lingering fays
renew their ring,
By milkmaid seen beneath the
hawthorn hoar,
Or round the marge of Minch-
more's haunted spring;
Save where their legends gray-
haired shepherds sing,
That now scarce win a listen-
ing ear but thine,
Of feuds obscure and Border
ravaging, 70
And rugged deeds recount in
rugged line
Of moonlight foray made on Te-
viot, Tweed, or Tyne.

IX

'No! search romantic lands,
where the near Sun
Gives with unstinted boon
ethereal flame,
Where the rude villager, his la-
bor done,
In verse spontaneous chants
some favored name,
Whether Olalia's charms his
tribute claim,
Her eye of diamond and her
locks of jet,
Or whether, kindling at the
deeds of Græme,
He sings, to wild Morisco mea-
sure set, 80
Old Albin's red claymore, green
Erin's bayonet!

X

'Explore those regions, where
the flinty crest
Of wild Nevada ever gleams
with snows,
Where in the proud Alhambra's
ruined breast
Barbaric monuments of pomp
repose;
Or where the banners of more
ruthless foes

Than the fierce Moor float o'er
Toledo's fane,
From whose tall towers even
now the patriot throws
An anxious glance, to spy
upon the plain
The blended ranks of England,
Portugal, and Spain. 90

XI

'There, of Numantian fire a
swarthy spark
Still lightens in the sunburnt
native's eye;
The stately port, slow step, and
visage dark
Still mark enduring pride and
constancy.
And, if the glow of feudal chiv-
alry
Beam not, as once, thy nobles'
dearest pride,
Iberia! oft thy crestless peas-
antry
Have seen the plumed Hidalgo
quit their side,
Have seen, yet dauntless stood —
'gainst fortune fought and
died.

XII

'And cherished still by that un-
changing race, 100
Are themes for minstrelsy
more high than thine;
Of strange tradition many a
mystic trace,
Legend and vision, prophecy
and sign;
Where wonders wild of Ara-
besque combine
With Gothic imagery of darker
shade,
Forming a model meet for min-
strel line.
Go, seek such theme! — The
Mountain Spirit said:
With filial awe I heard — I heard,
and I obeyed.

THE VISION OF DON RODERICK

I

REARING their crests amid the
 cloudless skies,
 And darkly clustering in the
 pale moonlight,
 Toledo's holy towers and spires
 arise,
 As from a trembling lake of
 silver white.
 Their mingled shadows inter-
 cept the sight
 Of the broad burial-ground
 outstretched below,
 And naught disturbs the silence
 of the night;
 All sleeps in sullen shade, or
 silver glow,
 All save the heavy swell of Teio's
 ceaseless flow.

II

All save the rushing swell of
 Teio's tide, ¹⁰
 Or, distant heard, a courser's
 neigh or tramp,
 Their changing rounds as watch-
 ful horsemen ride,
 To guard the limits of King
 Roderick's camp.
 For, through the river's night-
 fog rolling damp,
 Was many a proud pavilion
 dimly seen,
 Which glimmered back, against
 the moon's fair lamp,
 Tissues of silk and silver
 twisted sheen,
 And standards proudly pitched,
 and warders armed between.

III

But of their monarch's person
 keeping ward,
 Since last the deep-mouthed
 bell of vespers tolled, ²⁰
 The chosen soldiers of the royal
 guard
 The post beneath the proud
 cathedral hold:

A band unlike their Gothic sires
 of old,
 Who, for the cap of steel and
 iron mace,
 Bear slender darts and casques
 bedecked with gold,
 While silver-studded belts their
 shoulders grace,
 Where ivory quivers ring in the
 broad falchion's place.

IV

In the light language of an idle
 court,
 They murmured at their mas-
 ter's long delay,
 And held his lengthened orisons
 in sport: ³⁰
 'What! will Don Roderick
 here till morning stay,
 To wear in shrift and prayer the
 night away?
 And are his hours in such dull
 penance past,
 For fair Florinda's plundered
 charms to pay?'
 Then to the east their weary
 eyes they cast,
 And wished the lingering dawn
 would glimmer forth at last.

V

But, far within, Toledo's prelate
 lent
 An ear of fearful wonder to
 the king;
 The silver lamp a fitful lustre
 sent,
 So long that sad confession
 witnessing: ⁴⁰
 For Roderick told of many a hid-
 den thing,
 Such as are lothly uttered to
 the air,
 When Fear, Remorse, and Shame
 the bosom wring,
 And Guilt his secret burden
 cannot bear,
 And Conscience seeks in speech a
 respite from Despair.

VI

Full on the prelate's face and
 silver hair
 The stream of failing light was
 feebly rolled ;
 But Roderick's visage, though
 his head was bare,
 Was shadowed by his hand and
 mantle's fold.
 While of his hidden soul the
 sins he told, ⁵⁰
 Proud Alaric's descendant
 could not brook
 That mortal man his bearing
 should behold,
 Or boast that he had seen,
 when conscience shook,
 Fear tame a monarch's brow, re-
 morse a warrior's look.

VII

The old man's faded cheek
 waxed yet more pale,
 As many a secret sad the king
 bewrayed ;
 As sign and glance eked out the
 unfinished tale,
 When in the midst his faltering
 whisper staid. —
 ' Thus royal Witiza was slain,'
 he said ;
 ' Yet, holy father, deem not it
 was I.' ⁶⁰
 Thus still Ambition strives her
 crimes to shade. —
 ' O, rather deem 'twas stern
 necessity !
 Self-preservation bade, and I must
 kill or die.

VIII

' And if Florinda's shrieks
 alarmed the air,
 If she invoked her absent sire
 in vain
 And on her knees implored that
 I would spare,
 Yet, reverend priest, thy sen-
 tence rash refrain !

All is not as it seems — the
 female train
 Know by their bearing to dis-
 guise their mood : ' —
 But Conscience here, as if in high
 disdain, ⁷⁰
 Sent to the Monarch's cheek
 the burning blood —
 He stayed his speech abrupt — and
 up the prelate stood.

IX

' O hardened offspring of an iron
 race !
 What of thy crimes, Don Rod-
 erick, shall I say ?
 What alms or prayers or penance
 can efface
 Murder's dark spot, wash
 treason's stain away !
 For the foul ravisher how shall
 I pray,
 Who, scarce repentant, makes
 his crime his boast ?
 How hope Almighty vengeance
 shall delay,
 Unless, in mercy to yon Chris-
 tian host, ⁸⁰
 He spare the shepherd lest the
 guiltless sheep be lost.'

X

Then kindled the dark tyrant in
 his mood,
 And to his brow returned its
 dauntless gloom ;
 ' And welcome then,' he cried,
 ' be blood for blood,
 For treason treachery, for dis-
 honor doom !
 Yet will I know whence come
 they or by whom,
 Show, for thou canst — give
 forth the fated key,
 And guide me, priest, to that
 mysterious room
 Where, if aught true in old
 tradition be,
 His nation's future fates a Spanish
 king shall see.' ⁹⁰

XI

'Ill-fated Prince! recall the desperate word,
 Or pause ere yet the omen thou obey!
 Bethink, yon spell-bound portal would afford
 Never to former monarch entrance-way;
 Nor shall it ever ope, old records say,
 Save to a king, the last of all his line,
 What time his empire totters to decay,
 And treason digs beneath her fatal mine,
 And high above impends avenging wrath divine.'—

XII

'Prelate! a monarch's fate brooks no delay;
 Lead on!'—The ponderous key the old man took,
 And held the winking lamp, and led the way,
 By winding stair, dark aisle, and secret nook,
 Then on an ancient gateway bent his look;
 And, as the key the desperate king essayed,
 Low muttered thunders the cathedral shook,
 And twice he stopped and twice new effort made,
 Till the huge bolts rolled back and the loud hinges brayed.

XIII

Long, large, and lofty was that vaulted hall;
 Roof, walls, and floor were all of marble stone,
 Of polished marble, black as funeral pall,
 Carved o'er with signs and characters unknown.
 A paly light, as of the dawning, shone

Through the sad bounds, but whence they could not spy,
 For window to the upper air was none;
 Yet by that light Don Roderick could desery
 Wonders that ne'er till then were seen by mortal eye.

XIV

Grim sentinels, against the upper wall,
 Of molten bronze, two Statues held their place;
 Massive their naked limbs, their stature tall,
 Their frowning foreheads golden circles grace.
 Moulded they seemed for kings of giant race,
 That lived and sinned before the avenging flood;
 This grasped a scythe, that rested on a mace;
 This spread his wings for flight, that pondering stood,
 Each stubborn seemed and stern, immutable of mood.

XV

Fixed was the right-hand giant's brazen look
 Upon his brother's glass of shifting sand,
 As if its ebb he measured by a book,
 Whose iron volume loaded his huge hand;
 In which was wrote of many a fallen land,
 Of empires lost, and kings to exile driven:
 And o'er that pair their names in scroll expand—
 'Lo, DESTINY and TIME! to whom by Heaven
 The guidance of the earth is for a season given.'—

XVI

Even while they read, the sand-glass wastes away;

And, as the last and lagging
grains did creep,
That right hand giant 'gan his
club upsway,
As one that startles from a
heavy sleep.
Full on the upper wall the mace's
sweep 140
At once descended with the
force of thunder,
And, hurtling down at once in
crumbled heap,
The marble boundary was rent
asunder,
And gave to Roderick's view new
sights of fear and wonder.

XVII

For they might spy beyond that
mighty breach
Realms as of Spain in visioned
prospect laid,
Castles and towers, in due pro-
portion each,
As by some skilful artist's
hand portrayed :
Here, crossed by many a wild
Sierra's shade
And boundless plains that tire
the traveller's eye ; 150
There, rich with vineyard and
with olive glade,
Or deep-embrowned by forests
huge and high,
Or washed by mighty streams that
slowly murmured by.

XVIII

And here, as erst upon the an-
tique stage
Passed forth the band of mas-
quers trimly led,
In various forms and various
equipage,
While fitting strains the hear-
er's fancy fed ;
So, to sad Roderick's eye in or-
der spread,
Successive pageants filled that
mystic scene,
Showing the fate of battles ere
they bled, 160

And issue of events that had
not been ;
And ever and anon strange sounds
were heard between.

XIX

First shrilled an unrepeatd fe-
male shriek !—
It seemed as if Don Roderick
knew the call,
For the bold blood was blanch-
ing in his cheek. —
Then answered kettle-drum
and atabal,
Gong-peal and cymbal-clank the
ear appall,
The Tecbir war-cry and the
Lelie's yell
Ring wildly dissonant along the
hall.
Needs not to Roderick their
dread import tell — 170
The Moor ! ' he cried, ' the Moor !—
ring out the tocsin bell !

XX

' They come ! they come ! I see
the groaning lands
White with the turbans of
each Arab horde ;
Swart Zaarah joins her misbe-
lieving bands,
Alla and Mahomet their bat-
tle-word,
The choice they yield, the Koran
or the sword. —
See how the Christians rush to
arms amain !—
In yonder shout the voice of con-
flict roared,
The shadowy hosts are closing
on the plain —
Now, God and Saint Iago strike
for the good cause of Spain !

XXI

' By Heaven, the Moors prevail !
the Christians yield ! 181
Their coward leader gives for
flight the sign !
The sceptred craven mounts
to quit the field —

Is not yon steed Orelia?—
 Yes, 't is mine!
 But never was she turned from
 battle-line:
 Lo! where the recreant spurs
 o'er stock and stone!—
 Curses pursue the slave, and
 wrath divine!
 Rivers engulf him!'—'Hush,'
 in shuddering tone,
 The prelate said; 'rash prince,
 yon visioned form's thine
 own.'

XXII

Just then, a torrent crossed the
 flier's course; 190
 The dangerous ford the kingly
 likeness tried;
 But the deep eddies whelmed
 both man and horse,
 Swept like benighted peasant
 down the tide;
 And the proud Moslemah spread
 far and wide,
 As numerous as their native
 locust band;
 Berber and Ismael's sons the
 spoils divide,
 With naked scimitars mete out
 the land,
 And for the bondsmen base the
 freeborn natives brand.

XXIII

Then rose the grated Harem, to
 enclose
 The loveliest maidens of the
 Christian line; 200
 Then, menials, to their misbe-
 lieving foes
 Castile's young nobles held for-
 bidden wine;
 Then, too, the holy Cross, salva-
 tion's sign,
 By impious hands was from
 the altar thrown,
 And the deep aisles of the pol-
 luted shrine
 Echoed, for holy hymn and or-
 gan-tone,
 The Santon's frantic dance, the
 Fakir's gibbering moan.

XXIV

How fares Don Roderick?—
 E'en as one who spies
 Flames dart their glare o'er
 midnight's sable woof,
 And hears around his children's
 piercing cries, 210
 And sees the pale assistants
 stand aloof;
 While cruel Conscience brings
 him bitter proof
 His folly or his crime have
 caused his grief;
 And while above him nods the
 crumbling roof,
 He curses earth and Heaven
 —himself in chief—
 Desperate of earthly aid, despair-
 ing Heaven's relief!

XXV

That scythe-armed Giant turned
 his fatal glass
 And twilight on the landscape
 closed her wings;
 Far to Asturian hills the war-
 sounds pass,
 And in their stead rebeck or
 timbrel rings; 220
 And to the sound the bell-decked
 dancer springs,
 Bazaars resound as when their
 marts are met,
 In tourney light the Moor his
 jerrid flings,
 And on the land as evening
 seemed to set,
 The Imaum's chant was heard
 from mosque or minaret.

XXVI

So passed that pageant. Ere
 another came
 The visionary scene was
 wrapped in smoke,
 Whose sulphurous wreaths were
 crossed by sheets of flame;
 With every flash a bolt explo-
 sive broke,
 Till Roderick deemed the fiends
 had burst their yoke 230
 And waved 'gainst heaven the
 infernal gonfalone!

For War a new and dreadful lan-
guage spoke,
Never by ancient warrior
heard or known;
Lightning and smoke her breath,
and thunder was her tone.

XXVII

From the dim landscape roll the
clouds away —
The Christians have regained
their heritage;
Before the Cross has waned the
Crescent's ray,
And many a monastery decks
the stage,
And lofty church, and low-
browed hermitage.
The land obeys a Hermit and
a Knight, — ²⁴⁰
The Genii these of Spain for
many an age;
This clad in sackcloth, that in
armor bright,
And that was VALOR named, this
BIGOTRY was hight.

XXVIII

VALOR was harnessed like a
chief of old,
Armed at all points, and
prompt for knightly gest;
His sword was tempered in the
Ebro cold,
Morena's eagle plume adorned
his crest,
The spoils of Afric's lion bound
his breast.
Fierce he stepped forward and
flung down his gage;
As if of mortal kind to brave the
best. ²⁵⁰
Him followed his companion,
dark and sage
As he my Master sung, the dan-
gerous Archimago.

XXIX

Haughty of heart and brow the
warrior came,

In look and language proud
as proud might be,
Vaunting his lordship, lineage,
fights, and fame:
Yet was that barefoot monk
more proud than he;
And as the ivy climbs the tallest
tree,
So round the loftiest soul his
toils he wound,
And with his spells subdued the
fierce and free.
Till ermined Age and Youth in
arms renowned, ²⁶⁰
Honoring his scourge and hair-
cloth, meekly kissed the
ground.

XXX

And thus it chanced that VALOR,
peerless knight,
Who ne'er to king or Kaiser
veiled his crest,
Victorious still in bull-feast or in
fight,
Since first his limbs with mail
he did invest,
Stooped ever to that anchoret's
behest;
Nor reasoned of the right nor
of the wrong,
But at his bidding laid the lance
in rest,
And wrought fell deeds the
troubled world along,
For he was fierce as brave and
pitiless as strong. ²⁷⁰

XXXI

Oft his proud galleys sought
some new-found world,
That latest sees the sun or
first the morn;
Still at that wizard's feet their
spoils he hurled, —
Ingots of ore from rich Potosi
borne,
Crowns by Caciques, aigrettes
by Omrahs worn,
Wrought of rare gems, but
broken, rent, and foul;

Idols of gold from heathen temples torn,
 Bedabbled all with blood.—
 With grisly scowl
 The hermit marked the stains and
 smiled beneath his cowl.

XXXII

Then did he bless the offering,
 and bade make ²⁸⁰
 Tribute to Heaven of gratitude and praise;
 And at his word the choral
 hymns awake,
 And many a hand the silver
 censer sways,
 But with the incense-breath
 these censers raise
 Mix steams from corpses
 smouldering in the fire;
 The groans of prisoned victims
 mar the lays,
 And shrieks of agony confound
 the quire;
 While, 'mid the mingled sounds,
 the darkened scenes expire.

XXXIII

Preluding light, were strains of
 music heard,
 As once again revolved that
 measured sand; ²⁹⁰
 Such sounds as when, for sylvan
 dance prepared,
 Gay Xeres summons forth her
 vintage band;
 When for the light bolero ready
 stand
 The mozo blithe, with gay mu-
 chacha met,
 He conscious of his broidered
 cap and band,
 She of her netted locks and
 light corsette,
 Each tiptoe perched to spring and
 shake the castanet.

XXXIV

And well such strains the open-
 ing scene became;
 For VALOR had relaxed his
 ardent look,

And at a lady's feet, like lion
 tame, ³⁰⁰
 Lay stretched, full loath the
 weight of arms to brook;
 And softened BIGOTRY upon his
 book
 Pattered a task of little good
 or ill:
 But the blithe peasant plied his
 pruning-hook,
 Whistled the muleteer o'er
 vale and hill,
 And rung from village-green the
 merry seguidille.

XXXV

Gray Royalty, grown impotent
 of toil,
 Let the grave sceptre slip his
 lazy hold;
 And careless saw his rule be-
 come the spoil
 Of a loose female and her min-
 ion bold. ³¹⁰
 But peace was on the cottage
 and the fold,
 From court intrigue, from bick-
 ering faction far;
 Beneath the chestnut-tree love's
 tale was told,
 And to the tinkling of the light
 guitar
 Sweet stooped the western sun,
 sweet rose the evening star.

XXXVI

As that sea-cloud, in size like hu-
 man hand
 When first from Carmel by the
 Tishbite seen,
 Came slowly overshadowing
 Israel's land,
 Awhile perchance bedecked
 with colors sheen,
 While yet the sunbeams on its
 skirts had been, ³²⁰
 Limning with purple and with
 gold its shroud,
 Till darker folds obscured the
 blue serene
 And blotted heaven with one
 broad sable cloud,

Then sheeted rain burst down and
whirlwinds howled aloud : —

XXXVII

Even so, upon that peaceful
scene was poured,
Like gathering clouds, full
many a foreign band,
And HE, their leader, wore in
sheath his sword,
And offered peaceful front
and open hand,
Veiling the perjured treachery
he planned,
By friendship's zeal and
honor's specious guise, 330
Until he won the passes of the
land;
Then burst were honor's oath
and friendship's ties!
He clutched his vulture grasp and
called fair Spain his prize.

XXXVIII

An iron crown his anxious fore-
head bore:
And well such diadem his
heart became
Who ne'er his purpose for re-
morse gave o'er,
Or checked his course for
piety or shame;
Who, trained a soldier, deemed
a soldier's fame
Might flourish in the wreath of
battles won,
Though neither truth nor honor
decked his name; 340
Who, placed by fortune on a
monarch's throne,
Recked not of monarch's faith or
mercy's kingly tone.

XXXIX

From a rude isle his ruder lin-
eage came:
The spark that, from a suburb-
hovel's hearth
Ascending, wraps some capital
in flame,

Hath not a meaner or more
sordid birth.
And for the soul that bade him
waste the earth —
The sable land-flood from some
swamp obscure,
That poisons the glad husband-
field with dearth,
And by destruction bids its
fame endure, 350
Hath not a source more sullen,
stagnant, and impure.

XL

Before that leader strode a shad-
owy form;
Her limbs like mist, her torch
like meteor showed,
With which she beckoned him
through fight and storm,
And all he crushed that
crossed his desperate road,
Nor thought, nor feared, nor
looked on what he trode.
Realms could not glut his
pride, blood could not slake,
So oft as e'er she shook her
torch abroad:
It was AMBITION bade his
terrors wake,
Nor deigned she, as of yore, a
milder form to take. 360

XLI

No longer now she spurned at
mean revenge,
Or staid her hand for con-
quered foeman's moan,
As when, the fates of aged Rome
to change,
By Cæsar's side she crossed
the Rubicon.
Nor joyed she to bestow the
spoils she won,
As when the banded powers
of Greece were tasked
To war beneath the Youth of
Macedon:
No seemly veil her modern
minion asked,

He saw her hideous face and
"loved the fiend unmasked.

XLII

That prelate marked his march
— on banners blazed 370
With battles won in many a
distant land,
On eagle-standards and on arms
he gazed;
'And hopest thou, then,' he
said, 'thy power shall stand?
O, thou hast builded on the
shifting sand
And thou hast tempered it
with slaughter's flood;
And know, fell scourge in the
Almighty's hand,
Gore-moistened trees shall per-
ish in the bud,
And by a bloody death shall die
the Man of Blood!'

XLIII

The ruthless leader beckoned
from his train
A wan fraternal shade, and
bade him kneel, 380
And paled his temples with the
crown of Spain,
While trumpets rang and her-
alds cried 'Castile!'
Not that he loved him — No! —
In no man's weal,
Scarce in his own, e'er joyed
that sullen heart;
Yet round that throne he bade
his warriors wheel,
That the poor puppet might
perform his part
And be a sceptred slave, at his
stern beck to start.

XLIV

But on the natives of that land
misused
Not long the silence of amaze-
ment hung,
Nor brooked they long their
friendly faith abused; 390
For with a common shriek the
general tongue

Exclaimed, 'To arms!' and fast
to arms they sprung.

And VALOR woke, that Genius
of the land!

Pleasure and ease and sloth
aside he flung,
As burst the awakening Naza-
rite his band

When 'gainst his treacherous foes
he clenched his dreadful
hand.

XLV

That mimic monarch now cast
anxious eye

Upon the satraps that begirt
him round,

Now doffed his royal robe in act
to fly,

And from his brow the diadem
unbound. 400

So oft, so near, the Patriot bugle
wound,

From Tarik's walls to Bilboa's
mountains blown,

These martial satellites hard
labor found,

To guard awhile his substi-
tuted throne;

Light recking of his cause, but
battling for their own.

XLVI

From Alpuhara's peak that bu-
gle rung,

And it was echoed from Co-
runna's wall;

Stately Seville responsive war-
shout flung,

Grenada caught it in her
Moorish hall;

Galicia bade her children fight
or fall, 410

Wild Biscay shook his moun-
tain-coronet,

Valencia roused her at the bat-
tle-call,

And, foremost still where
Valor's sons are met,

Fast started to his gun each fiery
Miquelet.

XLVII

But unappalled and burning for
the fight,
The invaders march, of vic-
tory secure;
Skilful their force to sever or
unite,
And trained alike to vanquish
or endure,
Nor skilful less, cheap conquest
to insure
Discord to breathe and jeal-
ously to sow, ⁴²⁰
To quell by boasting and by
bribes to lure;
While naught against them
bring the unpractised foe,
Save hearts for freedom's cause
and hands for freedom's
blow.

XLVIII

Proudly they march — but, O,
they march not forth
By one hot field to crown a
brief campaign,
As when their eagles, sweeping
through the North,
Destroyed at every stoop an
ancient reign!
Far other fate had Heaven de-
creed for Spain;
In vain the steel, in vain the
torch was plied,
New Patriot armies started from
the slain, ⁴³⁰
High blazed the war, and long,
and far, and wide,
And oft the God of Battles blest
the righteous side.

XLIX

Nor unatoned, where Freedom's
foes prevail,
Remained their savage waste.
With blade and brand
By day the invaders ravaged
hill and dale,
But with the darkness the
Guerilla band

Came like night's tempest and
avenged the land,
And claimed for blood the re-
tribution due,
Probed the hard heart and
lopped the murd'rous hand;
And Dawn, when o'er the scene
her beams she threw, ⁴⁴⁰
Midst ruins they had made the
spoilers' corpses knew.

L

What minstrel verse may sing
or tongue may tell,
Amid the visioned strife from
sea to sea,
How oft the Patriot banners rose
or fell,
Still honored in defeat as vic-
tory?
For that sad pageant of events
to be
Showed every form of fight by
field and flood;
Slaughter and Ruin, shouting
forth their glee,
Beheld, while riding on the
tempest scud, ⁴⁴⁹
The waters choked with slain, the
earth bedrenched with blood!

LI

Then Zaragoza — blighted be the
tongue
That names thy name without
the honor due!
For never hath the harp of min-
strel rung
Of faith so felly proved, so
firmly true!
Mine, sap, and bomb thy shattered
ruins knew,
Each art of war's extremity
had room,
Twice from thy half-sacked
streets the foe withdrew,
And when at length stern Fate
decreed thy doom,
They won not Zaragoza but her
children's bloody tomb,

LII

Yet raise thy head, sad city!
 Though in chains, ⁴⁶⁰
 Enthralled thou canst not be!
 Arise, and claim
 Reverence from every heart
 where Freedom reigns,
 For what thou worshippest! —
 thy sainted dame,
 She of the Column, honored be
 her name
 By all, whate'er their creed,
 who honor love!
 And like the sacred relics of the
 flame
 That gave some martyr to the
 blessed above,
 To every loyal heart may thy sad
 embers prove!

LIII

Nor thine alone such wreck.
 Gerona fair!
 Faithful to death thy heroes
 should be sung, ⁴⁷⁰
 Manning the towers, while o'er
 their heads the air
 Swart as the smoke from ra-
 ging furnace hung;
 Now thicker darkening where
 the mine was sprung,
 Now briefly lightened by the
 cannon's flare,
 Now arched with fire-sparks as
 the bomb was flung,
 And reddening now with con-
 flagration's glare,
 While by the fatal light the foes
 for storm prepare.

LIV

While all around was danger,
 strife, and fear,
 While the earth shook and
 darkened was the sky,
 And wide destruction stunned
 the listening ear, ⁴⁸⁰
 Appalled the heart, and stupe-
 fied the eye, —

Afar was heard that thrice-re-
 peated cry,
 In which old Albion's heart
 and tongue unite,
 Whene'er her soul is up and
 pulse beats high,
 Whether it hail the wine-cup
 or the fight,
 And bid each arm be strong or bid
 each heart be light.

LV

Don Roderick turned him as the
 shout grew loud —
 A varied scene the changeful
 vision showed,
 For, where the ocean mingled
 with the cloud,
 A gallant navy stemmed the
 billows broad. ⁴⁹⁰
 From mast and stern Saint
 George's symbol flowed,
 Blent with the silver cross to
 Scotland dear;
 Mottling the sea their landward
 barges rowed,
 And flashed the sun on bayo-
 net, brand, and spear,
 And the wild beach returned the
 seamen's jovial cheer.

LVI

It was a dread yet spirit-stirring
 sight!
 The billows foamed beneath a
 thousand oars,
 Fast as they land the red-cross
 ranks unite,
 Legions on legions brightening
 all the shores.
 Then banners rise and cannon-
 signal roars, ⁵⁰⁰
 Then peals the warlike thun-
 der of the drum,
 Thrills the loud fife, the trumpet-
 flourish pours,
 And patriot hopes awake and
 doubts are dumb,
 For, bold in Freedom's cause, the
 bands of Ocean come!

LVII

A various host they came —
 whose ranks display
 Each mode in which the war-
 rior meets the fight:
 The deep battalion locks its firm
 array,
 And meditates his aim the
 marksman light;
 Far glance the lines of sabres
 flashing bright,
 Where mounted squadrons
 shake the echoing mead; ⁵¹⁰
 Lacks not artillery breathing
 flame and night,
 Nor the fleet ordnance whirled
 by rapid steed,
 That rivals lightning's flash in ruin
 and in speed.

LVIII

A various host — from kindred
 realms they came,
 Brethren in arms but rivals in
 renown —
 For yon fair bands shall merry
 England claim,
 And with their deeds of valor
 deck her crown.
 Hers their bold port, and hers
 their martial frown,
 And hers their scorn of death
 in freedom's cause,
 Their eyes of azure, and their
 locks of brown, ⁵²⁰
 And the blunt speech that
 bursts without a pause,
 And freeborn thoughts which
 league the soldier with the
 laws.

LIX

And, O loved warriors of the
 minstrel's land!
 Yonder your bonnets nod, your
 tartans wave!
 The rugged form may mark the
 mountain band,
 And harsher features, and a
 mien more grave;

But ne'er in battle-field throbb'd
 heart so brave
 As that which beats beneath
 the Scottish plaid;
 And when the pibroch bids the
 battle rave,
 And level for the charge your
 arms are laid, ⁵³⁰
 Where lives the desperate foe that
 for such onset staid?

LX

Hark! from yon stately ranks
 what laughter rings,
 Mingling wild mirth with war's
 stern minstrelsy,
 His jest while each blithe com-
 rade round him flings
 And moves to death with mili-
 tary glee:
 Boast, Erin, boast them! tame-
 less, frank, and free,
 In kindness warm and fierce
 in danger known,
 Rough nature's children, humor-
 ous as she:
 And HE, yon Chieftain — strike
 the proudest tone
 Of thy bold harp, green Isle! — the
 hero is thine own. ⁵⁴⁰

LXI

Now on the scene Vimeira
 should be shown,
 On Talavera's fight should
 Roderick gaze,
 And hear Corunna wail her
 battle won,
 And see Busaco's crest with
 lightning blaze: —
 But shall fond fable mix with
 heroes' praise?
 Hath Fiction's stage for
 Truth's long triumphs room?
 And dare her wild-flowers mingle
 with the bays
 That claim a long eternity to
 bloom
 Around the warrior's crest and
 o'er the warrior's tomb!

LXII

Or may I give adventurous
 Fancy scope, 550
 And stretch a bold hand to
 the awful veil
 That hides futurity from anxious
 hope.
 Bidding beyond it scenes of
 glory hail,
 And painting Europe rousing at
 the tale
 Of Spain's invaders from her
 confines hurled,
 While kindling nations buckle
 on their mail,
 And Fame, with clarion-blast
 and wings unfurled,
 To freedom and revenge awakes
 an injured world?

LXIII

O vain, though anxious, is the
 glance I cast,
 Since Fate has marked futurity
 her own: 560
 Yet Fate resigns to worth the
 glorious past,
 The deeds recorded and the
 laurels won.
 Then, though the Vault of De-
 stiny be gone,
 King, prelate, all the phan-
 tasms of my brain,
 Melted away like mist-wreaths
 in the sun,
 Yet grant for faith, for valor,
 and for Spain,
 One note of pride and fire, a pa-
 triot's parting strain!

CONCLUSION

I

' Who shall command Estrella's
 mountain-tide
 Back to the source, when tem-
 pest-chafed, to hie?
 Who, when Gascogne's vexed
 gulf is raging wide,

Shall hush it as a nurse her in-
 fant's cry?
 His magic power let such vain
 boaster try,
 And when the torrent shall his
 voice obey,
 And Biscay's whirlwinds list his
 lullaby,
 Let him stand forth and bar
 mine eagles' way,
 And they shall heed his voice and
 at his bidding stay.

II

' Else ne'er to stoop till high on
 Lisbon's towers 10
 They close their wings, the
 symbol of our yoke,
 And their own sea hath whelmed
 yon red-cross powers!'
 Thus, on the summit of Al-
 verca's rock,
 To marshal, duke, and peer
 Gaul's leader spoke.
 While downward on the land
 his legions press,
 Before them it was rich with
 vine and flock,
 And smiled like Eden in her
 summer dress;—
 Behind their wasteful march a
 reeking wilderness.

III

And shall the boastful chief
 maintain his word,
 Though Heaven hath heard
 the wallings of the land, 20
 Though Lusitania whet her
 vengeful sword,
 Though Britons arm and
 WELLINGTON command?
 No! grim Busaco's iron ridge
 shall stand
 An adamant barrier to his
 force;
 And from its base shall wheel
 his shattered band,
 As from the unshaken rock
 the torrent hoarse
 Bears off its broken waves and
 seeks a devious course,

IV

Yet not because Alcoba's moun-
tain-hawk
Hath on his best and bravest
made her food,
In numbers confident, yon chief
shall balk
His lord's imperial thirst for³⁰
spoil and blood:
For full in view the promised
conquest stood,
And Lisbon's matrons from
their walls might sum
The myriads that had half the
world subdued,
And hear the distant thunders
of the drum
That bids the bands of France to
storm and havoc come.

V

Four moons have heard these
thunders idly rolled,
Have seen these wistful my-
riads eye their prey,
As famished wolves survey a
guarded fold —
But in the middle path a Lion
lay!⁴⁰
At length they move — but not
to battle-fray,
Nor blaze yon fires where
meets the manly fight;
Beacons of infamy, they light the
way
Where cowardice and cruelty
unite
To damn with double shame their
ignominious flight!

VI

O triumph for the fiends of lust
and wrath!
Ne'er to be told, yet ne'er to
be forgot,
What wanton horrors marked
their wrackful path!
The peasant butchered in his
ruined cot,

The hoary priest even at the
altar shot,⁵⁰
Childhood and age given o'er
to sword and flame,
Woman to infamy; — no crime
forgot,
By which inventive demons
might proclaim
Immortal hate to man and scorn
of God's great name!

VII

The rudest sentinel in Britain
born
With horror paused to view
the havoc done,
Gave his poor crust to feed some
wretch forlorn,
Wiped his stern eye, then
fiercer grasped his gun.
Nor with less zeal shall Britain's
peaceful son
Exult the debt of sympathy to
pay;⁶⁰
Riches nor poverty the tax shall
shun,
Nor prince nor peer, the
wealthy nor the gay,
Nor the poor peasant's mite, nor
bard's more worthless lay.

VIII

But thou — unfoughten wilt
thou yield to Fate,
Minion of Fortune, now mis-
called in vain!
Can vantage-ground no confi-
dence create,
Marcella's pass, nor Guarda's
mountain-chain?
Vainglorious fugitive, yet turn
again!
Behold, where, named by some
prophetic seer,
Flows Honor's Fountain, as fore-
doomed the stain⁷⁰
From thy dishonored name and
arms to clear —
Fallen child of Fortune, turn, re-
deem her favor here!

IX

Yet, ere thou turn'st, collect each
distant aid;
Those chiefs that never heard
the lion roar!
Within whose souls lives not a
trace portrayed
Of Talavera or Mondego's
shore!
Marshal each band thou hast
and summon more;
Of war's fell stratagems ex-
haust the whole;
Rank upon rank, squadron on
squadron pour,
Legion on legion on thy foe-
man roll, 80
And weary out his arm — thou
canst not quell his soul.

X

O vainly gleams with steel
Agueda's shore,
Vainly thy squadrons hide
Assuava's plain,
And front the flying thunders as
they roar,
With frantic charge and ten-
fold odds, in vain!
And what avails thee that for
CAMERON slain
Wild from his plaided ranks
the yell was given?
Vengeance and grief gave moun-
tain-rage the rein,
And, at the bloody spear-point
headlong driven.
Thy despot's giant guards fled like
the rack of heaven. 90

XI

Go, baffled boaster! teach thy
haughty mood
To plead at thine imperious
master's throne!
Say, thou hast left his legions in
their blood,
Deceived his hopes and frus-
trated thine own;
Say, that thine utmost skill and
valor shown

By British skill and valor were
outvied;
Last say, thy conqueror was
WELLINGTON!
And if he chafe, be his own
fortune tried —
God and our cause to friend, the
venture we'll abide.

XII

But you, the heroes of that well-
fought day, 100
How shall a bard unknowing
and unknown
His meed to each victorious
leader pay,
Or bind on every brow the
laurels won?
Yet fain my harp would wake
its boldest tone,
O'er the wide sea to hail CA-
DOGAN brave;
And he perchance the minstrel-
note might own,
Mindful of meeting brief that
Fortune gave
Mid yon far western isles that hear
the Atlantic rave.

XIII

Yes! hard the task, when Brit-
ons wield the sword,
To give each chief and every
field its fame: 110
Hark! Albuera thunders BERES-
FORD,
And red Barosa shouts for
dauntless GRÆME!
O for a verse of tumult and of
flame,
Bold as the bursting of their
cannon sound,
To bid the world re-echo to their
fame!
For never upon gory battle-
ground
With conquest's well-bought
wreath were braver victors
crowned!

XIV

O who shall grudge him Al-
 buera's bays
 Who brought a race regene-
 rate to the field,
 Roused them to emulate their
 fathers' praise, ¹²⁰
 Tempered their headlong rage,
 their courage steeled,
 And raised fair Lusitania's
 fallen shield,
 And gave new edge to Lusi-
 tania's sword,
 And taught her sons forgotten
 arms to wield —
 Shivered my harp and burst its
 every chord,
 If it forget thy worth, victorious
 BERESFORD!

XV

Not on that bloody field of battle
 won,
 Though Gaul's proud legions
 rolled like mist away,
 Was half his self-devoted valor
 shown, —
 He gaged but life on that illus-
 trious day; ¹³⁰
 But when he toiled those squad-
 rons to array
 Who fought like Britons in the
 bloody game,
 Sharper than Polish pike or as-
 sagay,
 He braved the shafts of cen-
 sure and of shame,
 And, dearer far than life, he
 pledged a soldier's fame.

XVI

Nor be his praise o'erpast who
 strove to hide
 Beneath the warrior's vest
 affection's wound,
 Whose wish Heaven for his
 country's weal denied;
 Danger and fate ne sought,
 but glory found.

From clime to clime, where'er
 war's trumpets sound, ¹⁴⁰
 The wanderer went; yet, Cale-
 donia! still
 Thine was his thought in march
 and tented ground;
 He dreamed mid Alpine cliffs
 of Athole's hill,
 And heard in Ebro's roar his
 Lyndoch's lovely rill.

XVII

O hero of a race renowned of old,
 Whose war-cry oft has waked
 the battle-swell,
 Since first distinguished in the
 onset bold,
 Wild sounding when the Ro-
 man rampart fell!
 By Wallace' side it rung the
 Southron's knell,
 Alderne, Kilsythe, and Tibber
 owned its fame, ¹⁵⁰
 Tummell's rude pass can of its
 terrors tell,
 But ne'er from prouder field
 arose the name
 Than when wild Ronda learned
 the conquering shout of
 GREME!

XVIII

But all too long, through seas un-
 known and dark, —
 With Spenser's parable I close
 my tale, —
 By shoal and rock hath steered
 my venturous bark,
 And landward now I drive be-
 fore the gale.
 And now the blue and distant
 shore I hail,
 And nearer now I see the port
 expand,
 And now I gladly furl my weary
 sail, ¹⁶⁰
 And, as the prow light touches
 on the strand,
 I strike my red-cross flag and
 bind my skiff to land.

ROKEBY

A POEM IN SIX CANTOS

TO

JOHN B. S. MORRITT, ESQ.

THIS POEM

THE SCENE OF WHICH IS LAID IN HIS BEAUTIFUL DEMESNE
OF ROKEBY, IS INSCRIBED, IN TOKEN OF SINCERE

FRIENDSHIP, BY

WALTER SCOTT.

ADVERTISEMENT

The Scene of this Poem is laid at Rokeby, near Greta Bridge, in Yorkshire, and shifts to the adjacent fortress of Barnard Castle, and to other places in that Vicinity.

The Time occupied by the Action is a space of Five Days, Three of which are supposed to elapse between the end of the Fifth and the beginning of the Sixth Canto.

The date of the supposed events is immediately subsequent to the great Battle of Marston Moor, 3d July, 1644. This period of public confusion has been chosen without any purpose of combining the Fable with the Military or Political Events of the Civil War, but only as affording a degree of probability to the Fictitious Narrative now presented to the Public.

CANTO FIRST

I

THE moon is in her summer glow,
But hoarse and high the breezes blow,
And, racking o'er her face, the cloud
Varies the tincture of her shroud;
On Barnard's towers and Tees's stream
She changes as a guilty dream,
When Conscience with remorse
and fear
Goads sleeping Fancy's wild career.

Her light seems now the blush of
shame,
Seems now fierce anger's darker
flame,
Shifting that shade to come and go,
Like apprehension's hurried glow;
Then sorrow's livery dims the air,
And dies in darkness, like despair.
Such varied hues the warder sees
Reflected from the woodland Tees,
Then from old Baliol's tower looks
forth,
Sees the clouds mustering in the
north,
Hears upon turret-roof and wall
By fits the plashing rain-drop fall,

Lists to the breeze's boding sound,
And wraps his shaggy mantle
round.

II

Those towers, which in the change-
ful gleam

Throw murky shadows on the
stream,

Those towers of Barnard hold a
guest,

The emotions of whose troubled
breast,

In wild and strange confusion
driven,

Rival the flitting rack of heaven.

Ere sleep stern OSWALD'S senses
tied,

Of had he changed his weary
side, 30

Composed his limbs, and vainly
sought

By effort strong to banish thought.
Sleep came at length, but with a
train

Of feelings true and fancies vain,

Mingling, in wild disorder east,

The expected future with the past.

Conscience, anticipating time,

Already rues the enacted crime,

And calls her furies forth to shake

The sounding scourge and hissing
snake; 40

While her poor victim's outward
throes

Bear witness to his mental woes,

And show what lesson may be read

Beside a sinner's restless bed.

III

Thus Oswald's laboring feelings
trace

Strange changes in his sleeping
face,

Rapid and ominous as these

With which the moonbeams tinge
the Tees.

There might be seen of shame the
blush,

There anger's dark and fiercer
flush, 50

While the perturbed sleeper's hand
Seemed grasping dagger-knife or
brand.

Relaxed that grasp, the heavy
sigh,

The tear in the half-opening eye,
The pallid cheek and brow, con-
fessed

That grief was busy in his breast:
Nor pause that mood—a sudden
start

Impelled the life-blood from the
heart;

Features convulsed and mutter-
ings dread

Show terror reigns in sorrow's
stead. 60

That pang the painful slumber
broke,

And Oswald with a start awoke.

IV

He woke, and feared again to close
His eyelids in such dire repose;
He woke, — to watch the lamp, and
tell

From hour to hour the castle-bell,
Or listen to the owl's cry,

Or the sad breeze that whistles
by,

Or catch by fits the tuneless rhyme
With which the warder cheats the
time, 70

And envying think how, when the
sun

Bids the poor soldier's watch be
done,

Couched on his straw and fancy-
free,

He sleeps like careless infancy.

V

Far townward sounds a distant
tread,

And Oswald, starting from his bed,
Hath caught it, though no human
ear,

Unsharpened by revenge and fear,
Could e'er distinguish horse's

clank, 79

Until it reached the castle bank.

Now nigh and plain the sound appears,
 The warder's challenge now he hears,
 Then clanking chains and levers tell
 That o'er the moat the drawbridge fell,
 And, in the castle court below,
 Voices are heard, and torches glow,
 As marshalling the stranger's way
 Straight for the room where Oswald lay;
 The cry was, 'Tidings from the host,
 Of weight—a messenger comes post.' 90
 Stifling the tumult of his breast,
 His answer Oswald thus expressed,
 'Bring food and wine, and trim the fire;
 Admit the stranger and retire.'

VI

The stranger came with heavy stride;
 The morion's plumes his visage hide,
 And the buff-coat in ample fold
 Mantles his form's gigantic mould.
 Full slender answer deigned he
 To Oswald's anxious courtesy, 100
 But marked by a disdainful smile
 He saw and scorned the petty wile,
 When Oswald changed the torch's place,
 Anxious that on the soldier's face
 Its partial lustre might be thrown,
 To show his looks yet hide his own.
 His guest the while laid slow aside
 The ponderous cloak of tough bull's hide,
 And to the torch glanced broad and clear
 The corselet of a cuirassier; 110
 Then from his brows the casque he drew
 And from the dank plume dashed the dew,

From gloves of mail relieved his hands
 And spread them to the kindling brands,
 And, turning to the genial board,
 Without a health or pledge or word
 Of meet and social reverence said,
 Deeply he drank and fiercely fed,
 As free from ceremony's sway
 As famished wolf that tears his prey. 120

VII

With deep impatience, tinged with fear,
 His host beheld him gorge his cheer,
 And quaff the full carouse that lent
 His brow a fiercer hardiment.
 Now Oswald stood a space aside,
 Now paced the room with hasty stride,
 In feverish agony to learn
 Tidings of deep and dread concern,
 Cursing each moment that his guest 129
 Protracted o'er his ruffian feast,
 Yet, viewing with alarm at last
 The end of that uncouth repast,
 Almost he seemed their haste to rue
 As at his sign his train withdrew,
 And left him with the stranger free
 To question of his mystery.
 Then did his silence long proclaim
 A struggle between fear and shame.

VIII

Much in the stranger's mien appears
 To justify suspicious fears. 140
 On his dark face a scorching clime
 And toil had done the work of time,
 Roughened the brow, the temples bared,
 And sable hairs with silver shared

Yet left—what age alone could
tame—

The lip of pride, the eye of flame;
The full-drawn lip that upward
curled,

The eye that seemed to scorn the
world.

That lip had terror never
blanched;

Ne'er in that eye had tear-drop
quenched 150

The flash severe of swarthy glow
That mocked at pain and knew
not woe.

Inured to danger's direst form,
Tornado and earthquake, flood
and storm,

Death had he seen by sudden
blow,

By wasting plague, by tortures
slow,

By mine or breach, by steel or
ball,

Knew all his shapes and scorned
them all.

IX

But yet, though BERTRAM'S hard-
ened look

Unmoved could blood and danger
brook, 160

Still worse than apathy had place
On his swart brow and callous
face;

For evil passions cherished long
Had ploughed them with impres-
sions strong.

All that gives gloss to sin, all gay
Light folly, past with youth away,
But rooted stood in manhood's
hour

The weeds of vice without their
flower.

And yet the soil in which they
grew,

Had it been tamed when life was
new, 170

Had depth and vigor to bring forth
The harder fruits of virtuous
worth.

Not that e'en then his heart had
known

The gentler feelings' kindly tone;
But lavish waste had been refined
To bounty in his chastened mind,
And lust of gold, that waste to
feed,

Been lost in love of glory's meed,
And, frantic then no more, his
pride

Had ta'en fair virtue for its
guide. 180

X

Even now, by conscience unre-
strained,

Clogged by gross vice, by slaugh-
ter stained,

Still knew his daring soul to soar
And mastery o'er the mind he
bore;

For meaner guilt or heart less
hard

Quailed beneath Bertram's bold
regard.

And this felt Oswald, while in
vain

He strove by many a winding
train

To lure his sullen guest to show
Unasked the news he longed to
know, 190

While on far other subject hung
His heart than faltered from his
tongue.

Yet naught for that his guest did
deign

To note or spare his secret pain,
But still in stern and stubborn
sort

Returned him answer dark and
short,

Or started from the theme to range
In loose digression wild and
strange,

And forced the embarrassed host
to buy

By query close direct reply. 200

XI

Awhile he glozed upon the cause
Of Commons, Covenant, and Laws,
And Church reformed—but felt
rebuke

Beneath grim Bertram's sneering
look,
Then stammered — 'Has a field
been fought?
Has Bertram news of battle
brought?
For sure a soldier, famed so far
In foreign fields for feats of war,
On eve of fight ne'er left the host
Until the field were won and
lost.' 210
'Here, in your towers by circling
Tees,
You, Oswald Wycliffe, rest at
ease:
Why deem it strange that others
come
To share such safe and easy home,
From fields where danger, death,
and toil
Are the reward of civil broil?' —
'Nay, mock not, friend! since well
we know
The near advances of the foe,
To mar our northern army's work,
Encamped before beleaguered
York 220
Thy horse with valiant Fairfax
lay.
And must have fought — how went
the day?' 230

XII

'Wouldst hear the tale? — On
Marston heath
Met front to front the ranks of
death;
Flourished the trumpets fierce,
and now
Fired was each eye and flushed
each brow;
On either side loud clamors ring,
"God and the Cause!" — "God
and the King!"
Right English all, they rushed to
blows,
With naught to win and all to
lose. 230
I could have laughed — but lacked
the time —
To see, in phrenesy sublime,

How the fierce zealots fought and
bled
For king or state, as humor led;
Some for a dream of public good,
Some for church-tippet, gown, and
hood,
Draining their veins, in death to
claim
A patriot's or a martyr's name. —
Led Bertram Risingham the
hearts
That countered there on adverse
parts, 240
No superstitious fool had I
Sought El Dorados in the sky!
Chili had heard me through her
states,
And Lima oped her silver gates,
Rich Mexico I had marched
through,
And sacked the splendors of Peru,
Till sunk Pizarro's daring name,
And, Cortez, thine, in Bertram's
fame.' —
'Still from the purpose wilt thou
stray!
Good gentle friend, how went the
day?' 250

XIII

'Good am I deemed at trumpet
sound,
And good where goblets dance the
round,
Though gentle ne'er was joined
till now
With rugged Bertram's breast and
brow. —
But I resume. The battle's rage
Was like the strife which currents
wage
Where Orinoco in his pride
Rolls to the main no tribute tide,
But 'gainst broad ocean urges
far
A rival sea of roaring war; 260
While, in ten thousand eddies
driven,
The billows fling their foam to
heaven,
And the pale pilot seeks in vain

Where rolls the river, where the
main:

Even thus upon the bloody field
The eddyng tides of conflict
wheeled

Ambiguous, till that heart of
flame,

Hot Rupert, on our squadrons
came,

Hurling against our spears a line
Of gallants fiery as their wine; ²⁷⁰

Then ours, though stubborn in
their zeal,

In zeal's despite began to reel.

What wouldst thou more?—in
tumult tost,

Our leaders fell, our ranks were
lost.

A thousand men who drew the
sword

For both the Houses and the
Word,

Preached forth from hamlet,
grange, and down,

To curb the crosier and the crown,
Now, stark and stiff, lie stretched

in gore,

And ne'er shall rail at mitre
more.— ²⁸⁰

Thus fared it when I left the fight,
With the good Cause and Com-
mons' right.' —

XIV

'Disastrous news!' dark Wycliffe
said;

Assumed despondence bent his
head,

While troubled joy was in his eye,
The well-feigned sorrow to be-
lie.—

'Disastrous news!—when needed
most,

Told ye not that your chiefs were
lost?

Complete the woful tale and say
Who fell upon that fatal day, ²⁹⁰

What leaders of repute and name
Bought by their death a deathless

fame.
If such my direst foeman's doom,

My tears shall dew his honored
tomb.—

No answer?—Friend, of all our
host,

Thou know'st whom I should hate
the most,

Whom thou too once wert wont to
hate,

Yet leavest me doubtful of his
fate.'—

With look unmoved—'Of friend
or foe,

Aught,' answered Bertram,
'wouldst thou know, ³⁰⁰

Demand in simple terms and plain,
A soldier's answer shalt thou gain;

For question dark or riddle high
I have nor judgment nor reply.'

XV

The wrath his art and fear sup-
pressed

Now blazed at once in Wycliffe's
breast,

And brave from man so meanly
born

Roused his hereditary scorn.
'Wretch! hast thou paid thy

bloody debt?
PHILIP OF MORTHAM, lives he

yet? ³¹⁰

False to thy patron or thine oath,
Traitorous or perjured, one or

both.
Slave! hast thou kept thy promise

plight,
To slay thy leader in the fight?'
Then from his seat the soldier

sprung,
And Wycliffe's hand he strongly

wrung;
His grasp, as hard as glove of

mail,
Forced the red blood-drop from

the nail—
'A health!' he cried; and ere he

quaffed
Flung from him Wycliffe's hand

and laughed— ³²⁰

'Now, Oswald Wycliffe, speaks
thy heart!

Now play'st thou well thy genuine
part!
Worthy, but for thy craven fear,
Like me to roam a buccaneer.
What reck'st thou of the Cause
divine,
If Mortham's wealth and lands be
thine?
What carest thou for beleaguered
York,
If this good hand have done its
work?
Or what though Fairfax and his
best
Are reddening Marston's swarthy
breast,
If Philip Mortham with them lie,
Lending his life - blood to the
dye? —
Sit, then! and as mid comrades
free
Carousing after victory,
When tales are told of blood and
fear
That boys and women shrink to
hear,
From point to point I frankly
tell
The deed of death as it befell.

XVI

' When purposed vengeance I fore-
go,
Term me a wretch, nor deem me
foe;
And when an insult I forgive,
Then brand me as a slave and
live! —
Philip of Mortham is with those
Whom Bertram Risingham calls
foes;
Or whom more sure revenge at-
tends,
If numbered with ungrateful
friends.
As was his wont, ere battle
glowed,
Along the marshalled ranks he
rode,
And wore his visor up the while.
I saw his melancholy smile

350

When, full opposed in front, he
knew
Where ROKEBY's kindred banner
flew.
"And thus," he said, "will friends
divide!" —
I heard, and thought how side by
side
We two had turned the battle's
tide
In many a well-debated field
Where Bertram's breast was
Philip's shield.
I thought on Darien's deserts pale
Where death bestrides the even-
ing gale;
How o'er my friend my cloak I
threw,
And fenceless faced the deadly
dew;
I thought on Quariana's cliff
Where, rescued from our founder-
ing skiff,
Through the white breakers' wrath
I bore
Exhausted Mortham to the shore;
And, when his side an arrow
found,
I sucked the Indian's venomed
wound.
These thoughts like torrents rush-
ed along,
To sweep away my purpose strong.

XVII

' Hearts are not flint, and flints are
rent;
Hearts are not steel, and steel is
bent.
When Mortham bade me, as of
yore,
Be near him in the battle's roar,
I scarcely saw the spears laid low,
I scarcely heard the trumpets
blow;
Lost was the war in inward strife,
Debating Mortham's death or life.
'T was then I thought how, lured
to come
As partner of his wealth and home,
Years of piratic wandering o'er,

With him I sought our native
shore. 381

But Mortham's lord grew far es-
tranged

From the bold heart with whom
he ranged;

Doubts, horrors, superstitious
fears,

Saddened and dimmed descending
years;

The wily priests their victim
sought,

And damned each free-born deed
and thought.

Then must I seek another home,
My license shook his sober dome;

If gold he gave, in one wild day
I revelled thrice the sum away. 391

An idle outcast then I strayed,
Unfit for tillage or for trade.

Deemed, like the steel of rusted
lance,

Useless and dangerous at once.

The women feared my hardy look,
At my approach the peaceful
shook;

The merchant saw my glance of
flame,

And locked his hoards when Ber-
tram came;

Each child of coward peace kept
far 400

From the neglected son of war.

XVIII

'But civil discord gave the call,
And made my trade the trade of
all.

By Mortham urged, I came again
His vassals to the fight to train.

What guerdon waited on my care?
I could not cant of creed or prayer;

Sour fanatics each trust obtained,
And I, dishonored and disdained,

Gained but the high and happy
lot 410

In these poor arms to front the
shot!—

All this thou know'st, thy gestures
tell;

Yet hear it o'er and mark it well.

'T is honor bids me now relate
Each circumstance of Mortham's
fate.

XIX

'Thoughts, from the tongue that
slowly part,

Glance quick as lightning through
the heart.

As my spur pressed my courser's
side,

Philip of Mortham's cause was
tried,

And ere the charging squadrons
mixed 420

His plea was cast, his doom was
fixed.

I watched him through the doubt-
ful fray,

That changed as March's moody
day,

Till, like a stream that bursts its
bank,

Fierce Rupert thundered on our
flank.

'T was then, midst tumult, smoke,
and strife,

Where each man fought for death
or life,

'T was then I fired my petronel,
And Mortham, steed and rider, fell.

One dying look he upward cast, 430

Of wrath and anguish—'t was his
last.

Think not that there I stopped, to
view

What of the battle should ensue;
But ere I cleared that bloody
press,

Our northern horse ran master-
less;

Monekton and Mitton told the news
How troops of Roundheads choked

the Ouse,

And many a bonny Scot aghast,
Spurring his palfrey northward,

past,
Cursing the day when zeal or

meed 440

First lured their Lesley o'er the
Tweed.

Yet when I reached the banks of
Swale,
Had rumor learned another tale;
With his barbed horse, fresh tid-
ings say,
Stout Cromwell has redeemed the
day:
But whether false the news or true,
Oswald, I reckon as light as you.'

XX

Not then by Wycliffe might be
shown
How his pride startled at the tone
In which his complice, fierce and
free, 450
Asserted guilt's equality.
In smoothest terms his speech he
wove
Of endless friendship, faith, and
love;
Promised and vowed in courteous
sort,
But Bertram broke professions
short.
'Wycliffe, be sure not here I stay,
No, scarcely till the rising day;
Warned by the legends of my
youth,
I trust not an associate's truth.
Do not my native dales prolong 460
Of Percy Rede the tragic song,
Trained forward to his bloody fall,
By Girsonfield, that treacherous
Hall?
Oft by the Pringle's haunted side
The shepherd sees his spectre
glide.
And near the spot that gave me
name,
The moated mound of Risingham,
Where Reed upon her margin sees
Sweet Woodburne's cottages and
trees,
Some ancient sculptor's art has
shown 470
An outlaw's image on the stone;
Unmatched in strength, a giant he,
With quivered back and kirtled
knee.
Ask how he died, that hunter bold,

The tameless monarch of the
wold,
And age and infancy can tell
By brother's treachery he fell.
Thus warned by legends of my
youth,
I trust to no associate's truth.

XXI

'When last we reasoned of this
deed, 480
Naught, I bethink me, was agreed,
Or by what rule, or when, or
where,
The wealth of Mortham we should
share;
Then list while I the portion name
Our differing laws give each to
claim.
Thou, vassal sworn to England's
throne,
Her rules of heritage must own;
They deal thee, as to nearest heir,
Thy kinsman's lands and livings
fair,
And these I yield:—do thou re-
vere 490
The statutes of the buccaneer.
Friend to the sea, and foeman
sworn
To all that on her waves are
borne,
When falls a mate in battle broil
His comrade heirs his portioned
spoil;
When dies in fight a daring foe
He claims his wealth who struck
the blow;
And either rule to me assigns
Those spoils of Indian seas and
mines
Hoarded in Mortham's caverns
dark; 500
Ingot of gold and diamond spark,
Chalice and plate from churches
borne,
And gems from shrieking beauty
torn,
Each string of pearl, each silver
bar,
And all the wealth of western war.

I go to search where, dark and deep,
 Those trans-Atlantic treasures sleep.
 Thou must along—for, lacking thee,
 The heir will scarce find entrance free; 509
 And then farewell. I haste to try
 Each varied pleasure wealth can buy;
 When cloyed each wish, these wars afford
 Fresh work for Bertram's restless sword.'

XXII

An undecided answer hung
 On Oswald's hesitating tongue.
 Despite his craft, he heard with awe
 This ruffian stabber fix the law;
 While his own troubled passions veer
 Through hatred, joy, regret, and fear:—
 Joyed at the soul that Bertram flies, 520
 He grudged the murderer's mighty prize,
 Hated his pride's presumptuous tone,
 And feared to wend with him alone.
 At length, that middle course to steer
 To cowardice and craft so dear,
 'His charge,' he said, 'would ill allow
 His absence from the fortress now;
 WILFRID on Bertram should attend,
 His son should journey with his friend.'

XXIII

Contempt kept Bertram's anger down. 530
 And wreathed to savage smile his frown.

'Wilfrid, or thou, — 't is one to me
 Whichever bears the golden key.
 Yet think not but I mark, and smile

To mark, thy poor and selfish wile!
 If injury from me you fear,
 What, Oswald Wycliffe, shields thee here?

I've sprung from walls more high
 than these,

I've swam through deeper streams
 than Tees. 539

Might I not stab thee ere one yell
 Could rouse the distant sentinel?

Start not—it is not my design,
 But, if it were, weak fence were thine;

And, trust me that in time of need
 This hand hath done more desperate deed.

Go, haste and rouse thy slumbering son;

Time calls, and I must needs be gone.'

XXIV

Naught of his sire's ungenerous part

Polluted Wilfrid's gentle heart,
 A heart too soft from early life 550
 To hold with fortune needful strife.

His sire, while yet a hardier race
 Of numerous sons were Wycliffe's grace,

On Wilfrid set contemptuous brand
 For feeble heart and forceless hand;

But a fond mother's care and joy
 Were centred in her sickly boy.

No touch of childhood's frolic mood

Showed the elastic spring of blood;
 Hour after hour he loved to pore 560

On Shakespeare's rich and varied lore,

But turned from martial scenes and light,

From Falstaff's feast and Percy's fight,

To ponder Jaques' moral strain,
And muse with Hamlet, wise in
vain,
And weep himself to soft repose
O'er gentle Desdemona's woes.

XXV

In youth he sought not pleasures
found
By youth in horse and hawk and
hound, 569
But loved the quiet joys that wake
By lonely stream and silent lake;
In Deepdale's solitude to lie,
Where all is cliff and copse and
sky;
To climb Catcastle's dizzy peak,
Or lone Pendragon's mound to
seek.
Such was his wont; and there his
dream
Soared on some wild fantastic
theme
Of faithful love or ceaseless spring,
Till Contemplation's wearied wing
The enthusiast could no more sus-
tain, 580
And sad he sunk to earth again.

XXVI

He loved — as many a lay can tell,
Preserved in Stanmore's lonely
dell;
For his was minstrel's skill, he
caught
The art unteachable, untaught;
He loved — his soul did nature
frame
For love, and fancy nursed the
flame;
Vainly he loved — for seldom
swain
Of such soft mould is loved again;
Silent he loved — in every gaze 590
Was passion, friendship in his
phrase;
So mused his life away — till died
His brethren all, their father's
pride.
Wilfred is now the only heir
Of all his stratagems and care,

And destined darkling to pursue
Ambition's maze by Oswald's clue.

XXVII

Wilfrid must love and woo the
bright
Matilda, heir of Rokeby's knight.
To love her was an easy hest, 600
The secret empress of his breast;
To woo her was a harder task
To one that durst not hope or ask.
Yet all Matilda could she gave
In pity to her gentle slave;
Friendship, esteem, and fair re-
gard,
And praise, the poet's best re-
ward!
She read the tales his taste ap-
proved,
And sung the lays he framed or
loved; 609
Yet, loath to nurse the fatal flame
Of hopeless love in friendship's
name,
In kind caprice she oft withdrew
The favoring glance to friendship
due,
Then grieved to see her victim's
pain,
And gave the dangerous smiles
again.

XXVIII

So did the suit of Wilfrid stand
When war's loud summons waked
the land.
Three banners, floating o'er the
Tees,
The woe-foreboding peasant sees;
In concert oft they braved of old
The bordering Scot's incursion
bold: 621
Frowning defiance in their pride,
Their vassals now and lords di-
vide.
From his fair hall on Greta banks,
The Knight of Rokeby led his
ranks,
To aid the valiant northern earls
Who drew the sword for royal
Charles.

Mortham, by marriage near allied, —

His sister had been Rokeby's bride, 629

Though long before the civil fray
In peaceful grave the lady lay, —
Philip of Mortham raised his band,
And marched at Fairfax's command;

While Wycliffe, bound by many a train

Of kindred art with wily Vane,
Less prompt to brave the bloody field,

Made Barnard's battlements his shield,

Secured them with his Lunedale powers,

And for the Commons held the towers.

XXIX

The lovely heir of Rokeby's Knight 640

Waits in his halls the event of fight;

For England's war revered the claim

Of every unprotected name,
And spared amid its fiercest rage
Childhood and womanhood and age,

But Wilfrid, son to Rokeby's foe,
Must the dear privilege forego,
By Greta's side in evening gray,

To steal upon Matilda's way,
Striving with fond hypocrisy 650
For careless step and vacant eye;
Calming each anxious look and glance,

To give the meeting all to chance,
Or framing as a fair excuse

The book, the pencil, or the muse;
Something to give, to sing, to say,

Some modern tale, some ancient lay,

Then, while the longed-for minutes last, —

Ah! minutes quickly over-past! —
Recording each expression free 660

Of kind or careless courtesy,
Each friendly look, each softer tone,

As food for fancy when alone.

All this is o'er — but still unseen
Wilfrid may lurk in Eastwood green,

To watch Matilda's wonted round,
While springs his heart at every sound.

She comes! — 't is but a passing sight,

Yet serves to cheat his weary night;

She comes not — he will wait the hour 670

When her lamp lightens in the tower;

'T is something yet if, as she past,

Her shade is o'er the lattice cast.
'What is my life, my hope?' he said;

'Alas! a transitory shade.'

XXX

Thus wore his life, though reason strove

For mastery in vain with love,
Forcing upon his thoughts the sum
Of present woe and ills to come,
While still he turned impatient ear

From Truth's intrusive voice severe. 681

Gentle, indifferent, and subdued,
In all but this unmoved he viewed
Each outward change of ill and good:

But Wilfrid, docile, soft, and mild,
Was Fancy's spoiled and wayward child;

In her bright car she bade him ride,

With one fair form to grace his side,

Or, in some wild and lone retreat,
Flung her high spells around his seat, 690

Bathed in her dews his languid head,

Her fairy mantle o'er him spread,
 For him her opiates gave to
 flow,
 Which he who tastes can ne'er
 forego,
 And placed him in her circle, free
 From every stern reality,
 Till to the Visionary seem
 Her day-dreams truth, and truth a
 dream.

XXXI

Woe to the youth whom Fancy
 gains,
 Winning from Reason's hand the
 reins, 700
 Pity and woe! for such a mind
 Is soft, contemplative, and kind;
 And woe to those who train such
 youth,
 And spare to press the rights of
 truth,
 The mind to strengthen and an-
 neal
 While on the stithy glows the
 steel!
 O teach him while your lessons
 last
 To judge the present by the past;
 Remind him of each wish pur-
 sued,
 How rich it glowed with promised
 good; 710
 Remind him of each wish enjoyed,
 How soon his hopes possession
 cloyed!
 Tell him we play unequal game
 Whene'er we shoot by Fancy's
 aim;
 And, ere he strip him for her
 race,
 Show the conditions of the chase:
 Two sisters by the goal are set,
 Cold Disappointment and Regret;
 One disenchant the winner's
 eyes,
 And strips of all its worth the
 prize. 720
 While one augments its gaudy
 show,

More to enhance the loser's woe.
 The victor sees his fairy gold
 Transformed when won to drossy
 mould,
 But still the vanquished mourns
 his loss,
 And rules as gold that glittering
 dross.

XXXII

More wouldst thou know — yon
 tower survey,
 Yon couch unpressed since parting
 day,
 Yon untrimmed lamp, whose yel-
 low gleam
 Is mingling with the cold moon-
 beam, 730
 And yon thin form! — the hectic
 red
 On his pale cheek unequal spread;
 The head reclined, the loosened
 hair,
 The limbs relaxed, the mournful
 air. —
 See, he looks up; — a woful smile
 Lightens his woe-worn cheek a
 while, —
 'Tis Fancy wakes some idle
 thought,
 To gild the ruin she has wrought;
 For, like the bat of Indian brakes,
 Her pinions fan the wound she
 makes, 740
 And, soothing thus the dreamer's
 pain,
 She drinks his life-blood from the
 vein.
 Now to the lattice turn his eyes,
 Vain hope! to see the sun arise.
 The moon with clouds is still o'er-
 cast,
 Still howls by fits the stormy
 blast;
 Another hour must wear away
 Ere the east kindle into day,
 And hark! to waste that weary
 hour,
 He tries the minstrel's magic
 power. 750

XXXIII

SONG

TO THE MOON

Hail to thy cold and clouded
beam,

Pale pilgrim of the troubled
sky!

Hail, though the mists that o'er
thee stream

Lend to thy brow their sullen
dye!

How should thy pure and peaceful
eye

Untroubled view our scenes be-
low,

Or how a tearless beam supply
To light a world of war and woe!

Fair Queen! I will not blame thee
now,

As once by Greta's fairy side;

Each little cloud that dimmed thy
brow ⁷⁶¹

Did then an angel's beauty hide.

And of the shades I then could
chide

Still are the thoughts to memory
dear,

For, while a softer strain I tried,
They hid my blush and calmed
my fear.

Then did I swear thy ray serene
Was formed to light some lonely
dell,

By two fond lovers only seen,
Reflected from the crystal well;

Or sleeping on their mossy cell, ⁷⁷¹
Or quivering on the lattice
bright,

Or glancing on their couch, to tell
How swiftly wanes the summer
night!

XXXIV

He starts—a step at this lone
hour!

A voice!—his father seeks the
tower,

With haggard look and troubled
sense,

Fresh from his dreadful confer-
ence.

'Wilfrid!—what, not to sleep ad-
dressed?

Thou hast no cares to chase thy
rest. ⁷⁸⁰

Mortham has fallen on Marston-
moor;

Bertram brings warrant to secure
His treasures, bought by spoil and
blood,

For the state's use and public
good.

The menials will thy voice obey;
Let his commission have its way,

In every point, in every word.'

Then, in a whisper,—'Take thy

sword!

Bertram is—what I must not tell.

I hear his hasty step—fare-
well!' ⁷⁹⁰

CANTO SECOND

I

FAR in the chambers of the west,
The gale had sighed itself to rest;
The moon was cloudless now and
clear,

But pale and soon to disappear.
The thin gray clouds waxed dimly
light

On Brusleton and Houghton
height;

And the rich dale that eastward
lay

Waited the wakening touch of day,
To give its woods and cultured
plain,

And towers and spires, to light
again. ¹⁰

But, westward, Stanmore's shape-
less swell,

And Lunedale wild, and Kelton-
fell,

And rock-begirdled Gilmanscar,
And Arkingarth, lay dark afar;

While, as a livelier twilight falls,

Emerge proud Barnard's bannered
walls.
High crowned he sits in dawning
pale,
The sovereign of the lovely vale.

II

What prospects from his watch-
tower high
Gleam gradual on the warder's
eye!—²⁰
Far sweeping to the east, he sees
Down his deep woods the course
of Tees,
And tracks his wanderings by the
steam
Of summer vapors from the stream;
And ere he pace his destined hour
By Brackenbury's dungeon-tower,
These silver mists shall melt away
And dew the woods with glittering
spray.
Then in broad lustre shall be
shown²⁹
That mighty trench of living stone,
And each huge trunk that from
the side
Reclines him o'er the darksome
tide
Where Tees, full many a fathom
low,
Wears with his rage no common
foe;
For pebbly bank, nor sand-bed
here,
Nor clay-mound, checks his fierce
career,
Condemned to mine a channelled
way
O'er solid sheets of marble gray.

III

Nor Tees alone in dawning bright
Shall rush upon the ravished sight;
But many a tributary stream⁴¹
Each from its own dark dell shall
gleam:
Staindrop, who from her sylvan
bowers
Salutes proud Raby's battled
towers;

The rural brook of Egliston,
And Balder, named from Odin's
son;
And Greta, to whose banks ere
long
We lead the lovers of the song;
And silver Lune from Stanmore
wild,
And fairy Thorsgill's murmuring
child,⁵⁰
And last and least, but loveliest
still,
Romantic Deepdale's slender rill.
Who in that dim-wood glen hath
strayed,
Yet longed for Roslin's magic
glade?
Who, wandering there, hath sought
to change
Even for that vale so stern and
strange
Where Cartland's crags, fantastic
rent,
Through her green copse like
spires are sent?
Yet, Albin, yet the praise be thine,
Thy scenes and story to combine!
Thou bid'st him who by Roslin
strays⁶¹
List to the deeds of other days;
Mid Cartland's crags thou show'st
the cave,
The refuge of thy champion brave;
Giving each rock its storied tale,
Pouring a lay for every dale,
Knitting, as with a moral band,
Thy native legends with thy land,
To lend each scene the interest
high
Which genius beams from Beauty's
eye.⁷⁰

IV

Bertram awaited not the sight
Which sunrise shows from Bar-
nard's height,
But from the towers, preventing
day,
With Wilfrid took his early way,
While misty dawn and moonbeam
pale

Still mingled in the silent dale.
 By Barnard's bridge of stately
 stone
 The southern bank of Tees they
 won ;
 Their winding path then eastward
 cast, 79
 And Egliston's gray ruins passed ;
 Each on his own deep visions
 bent,
 Silent and sad they onward went.
 Well may you think that Bertram's
 mood
 To Wilfrid savage seemed and
 rude ;
 Well may you think bold Rising-
 ham
 Held Wilfrid trivial, poor, and
 tame ;
 And small the intercourse, I ween,
 Such uncongenial souls between.

V

Stern Bertram shunned the nearer
 way
 Through Rokeby's park and chase
 that lay, 90
 And, skirting high the valley's
 ridge,
 They crossed by Greta's ancient
 bridge,
 Descending where her waters wind
 Free for a space and unconfined
 As, 'scaped from Brignall's dark-
 wood glen,
 She seeks wild Mortham's deeper
 den.
 There, as his eye glanced o'er the
 mound
 Raised by that Legion long re-
 nowned
 Whose votive shrine asserts their
 claim 99
 Of pious, faithful, conquering fame,
 'Stern sons of war!' sad Wilfrid
 sighed,
 'Behold the boast of Roman pride !
 What now of all your toils are
 known ?
 A grassy trench, a broken
 stone !'—

This to himself ; for moral strain
 To Bertram were addressed in
 vain.

VI

Of different mood a deeper sigh
 Awoke when Rokeby's turrets
 high
 Were northward in the dawning
 seen 109
 To rear them o'er the thicket green.
 O then, though Spenser's self had
 strayed
 Beside him through the lovely
 glade,
 Lending his rich luxuriant glow
 Of fancy all its charms to show,
 Pointing the stream rejoicing free
 As captive set at liberty,
 Flashing her sparkling waves
 abroad,
 And clamoring joyful on her road ;
 Pointing where, up the sunny
 banks,
 The trees retire in scattered ranks
 Save where, advanced before the
 rest, 121
 On knoll or hillock rears his crest,
 Lonely and huge, the giant Oak,
 As champions when their band is
 broke
 Stand forth to guard the rearward
 post,
 The bulwark of the scattered
 host—
 All this and more might Spenser
 say,
 Yet waste in vain his magic lay,
 While Wilfrid eyed the distant
 tower
 Whose lattice lights Matilda's
 bower. 130

VII

The open vale is soon passed o'er,
 Rokeby, though nigh, is seen no
 more ;
 Sinking mid Greta's thickets deep,
 A wild and darker course they
 keep,
 A stern and lone yet lovely road

As e'er the foot of minstrel trode !
 Broad shadows o'er their passage
 fell,
 Deeper and narrower grew the
 dell ;
 It seemed some mountain, rent
 and riven,
 A channel for the stream had
 given, 140
 So high the cliffs of limestone gray
 Hung beetling o'er the torrent's
 way,
 Yielding along their rugged base
 A flinty footpath's niggard space,
 Where he who winds 'twixt rock
 and wave
 May hear the headlong torrent
 rave,
 And like a steed in frantic fit,
 That flings the froth from curb
 and bit,
 May view her chafe her waves to
 spray
 O'er every rock that bars her way,
 Till foam-globes on her eddies ride,
 Thick as the schemes of human
 pride 152
 That down life's current drive
 amain,
 As frail, as frothy, and as vain !

VIII

The cliffs that rear their haughty
 head
 High o'er the river's darksome
 bed
 Were now all naked, wild, and
 gray,
 Now waving all with greenwood
 spray,
 Here trees to every crevice clung
 And o'er the dell their branches
 hung ; 160
 And there, all splintered and un-
 even,
 The shivered rocks ascend to hea-
 ven ;
 Oft, too, the ivy swathed their
 breast
 And wreathed its garland round
 their crest,

Or from the spires bade loosely
 flare
 Its tendrils in the middle air.
 As pennons wont to wave of old
 O'er the high feast of baron bold,
 When revelled loud the feudal rout
 And the arched halls returned
 their shout, 170
 Such and more wild is Greta's
 roar,
 And such the echoes from her
 shore,
 And so the ivied banners gleam,
 Waved wildly o'er the brawling
 stream.

IX

Now from the stream the rocks re-
 cede,
 But leave between no sunny mead,
 No, nor the spot of pebbly sand
 Oft found by such a mountain
 strand,
 Forming such warm and dry re-
 treat
 As fancy deems the lonely seat
 Where hermit, wandering from his
 cell, 181
 His rosary might love to tell.
 But here 'twixt rock and river
 grew
 A dismal grove of sable yew,
 With whose sad tints were min-
 gled seen
 The blighted fir's sepulchral green.
 Seemed that the trees their shad-
 ows cast
 The earth that nourished them to
 blast ;
 For never knew that swarthy
 grove
 The verdant hue that fairies love,
 Nor wilding green nor woodland
 flower 191
 Arose within its baleful bower :
 The dank and sable earth receives
 Its only carpet from the leaves
 That, from the withering branches
 cast,
 Bestrewed the ground with every
 blast.

Though now the sun was o'er the
hill,
In this dark spot 't was twilight
still,
Save that on Greta's farther side
Some straggling beams through
copsewood glide; 200
And wild and savage contrast
made
That dingle's deep and funeral
shade
With the bright tints of early day,
Which, glimmering through the
ivy spray,
On the opposing summit lay.

X

The lated peasant shunned the
dell;
For Superstition wont to tell
Of many a grisly sound and sight,
Scaring its path at dead of night.
When Christmas logs blaze high
and wide 210
Such wonders speed the festal tide,
While Curiosity and Fear,
Pleasure and Pain, sit crouching
near,
Till childhood's cheek no longer
glows,
And village maidens lose the rose.
The thrilling interest rises higher,
The circle closes nigh and nigher,
And shuddering glance is cast be-
hind,
As louder moans the wintry wind.
Believe that fitting scene was laid
For such wild tales in Mortham
glade; 221
For who had seen on Greta's side
By that dim light fierce Bertram
stride,
In such a spot, at such an hour,—
If touched by Superstition's power,
Might well have deemed that Hell
had given
A murderer's ghost to upper hea-
ven,
While Wilfrid's form had seemed
to glide 228
Like his pale victim by his side.

XI

Nor think to village swains alone
Are these unearthly terrors known,
For not to rank nor sex confined
Is this vain ague of the mind;
Hearts firm as steel, as marble
hard,
'Gainst faith and love and pity
barred,
Have quaked, like aspen leaves in
May,
Beneath its universal sway.
Bertram had listed many a tale
Of wonder in his native dale, 239
That in his secret soul retained
The credence they in childhood
gained:
Nor less his wild adventurous
youth
Believed in every legend's truth;
Learned when beneath the tropic
gale
Full swelled the vessel's steady
sail,
And the broad Indian moon her
light
Poured on the watch of middle
night,
When seamen love to hear and tell
Of portent, prodigy, and spell:
What gales are sold on Lapland's
shore, 250
How whistle rash bids tempests
roar,
Of witch, of mermaid, and of
sprite,
Of Erick's cap and Elmo's light;
Or of that Phantom Ship whose
form
Shoots like a meteor through the
storm
When the dark scud comes driv-
ing hard,
And lowered is every top-sail
yard,
And canvas wove in earthly
looms
No more to brave the storm pre-
sumes! 259
Then mid the war of sea and sky,
Top and top-gallant hoisted high,

Full spread and crowded every
sail,
The Demon Frigate braves the
gale,
And well the doomed spectators
know
The harbinger of wreck and woe.

XII

Then, too, were told in stifled tone
Marvels and omens all their own;
How, by some desert isle or key
Where Spaniards wrought their
cruelty, ²⁶⁹

Or where the savage pirate's mood
Repaid it home in deeds of blood,
Strange nightly sounds of woe and
fear

Appalled the listening buccaneer,
Whose light-armed shallop an-
chored lay

In ambush by the lonely bay.
The groan of grief, the shriek of
pain,

Ring from the moonlight groves
of cane;

The fierce adventurer's heart they
scare,

Who wearies memory for a prayer,
Curses the roadstead, and with
gale ²⁸⁰

Of early morning lifts the sail,
To give, in thirst of blood and prey,
A legend for another bay.

XIII

Thus, as a man, a youth, a child,
Trained in the mystic and the
wild,

With this on Bertram's soul at
times

Rushed a dark feeling of his
crimes;

Such to his troubled soul their
form

As the pale Death-ship to the
storm,

And such their omen dim and
dread ²⁹⁰

As shrieks and voices of the dead.
That pang, whose transitory force

Hovered 'twixt horror and re-
morse —

That pang, perchance, his bosom
pressed

As Wilfrid sudden he addressed :

' Wilfrid, this glen is never trod
Until the sun rides high abroad,
Yet twice have I beheld to-day
A form that seemed to dog our
way;

Twice from my glance it seemed
to flee ³⁰⁰

And shroud itself by cliff or tree.
How think'st thou? — Is our path
waylaid?

Or hath thy sire my trust betrayed?
If so' — Ere, starting from his
dream

That turned upon a gentler theme,
Wilfrid had roused him to reply,
Bertram sprung forward, shouting
high,

' Whate'er thou art, thou now shalt
stand!'

And forth he darted, sword in
hand. ³⁰⁹

XIV

As bursts the levin in its wrath,
He shot him down the sounding
path;

Rock, wood, and stream rang
wildly out

To his loud step and savage shout.
Seems that the object of his race
Hath scaled the cliffs; his frantic
chase

Sidelong he turns, and now 'tis
bent

Right up the rock's tall battle-
ment;

Straining each sinew to ascend,
Foot, hand, and knee their aid
must lend.

Wilfrid, all dizzy with dismay, ³²⁰
Views from beneath his dreadful
way:

Now to the oak's warped roots he
clings,

Now trusts his weight to ivy
strings;

Now, like the wild-goat, must he dare

An unsupported leap in air;
Hid in the shrubby rain-course now,
You mark him by the crashing bough,

And by his corselet's sullen clank,
And by the stones spurned from the bank,

And by the hawk scared from her nest, ³³⁰

And raven's croaking o'er their guest,

Who deem his forfeit limbs shall pay

The tribute of his bold essay.

XV

See, he emerges! — desperate now
All farther course — yon beetling brow,

In craggy nakedness sublime,
What heart or foot shall dare to climb?

It bears no tendril for his clasp,
Presents no angle to his grasp:
Sole stay his foot may rest upon ³⁴⁰

Is yon earth-bedded jetting stone.
Balanced on such precarious prop,
He strains his grasp to reach the top.

Just as the dangerous stretch he makes,

By heaven, his faithless footstool shakes!

Beneath his tottering bulk it bends,
It sways, it loosens, it descends,
And downward holds its headlong way,

Crashing o'er rock and copsewood spray!

Loud thunders shake the echoing dell! ³⁵⁰

Fell it alone? — alone it fell.

Just on the very verge of fate,
The hardy Bertram's falling weight

He trusted to his sinewy hands,
And on the top unharmed he stands!

XVI

Wilfrid a safer path pursued,
At intervals where, roughly hewed,

Rude steps ascending from the dell

Rendered the cliffs accessible.

By circuit slow he thus attained
The height that Risingham had gained, ³⁶¹

And when he issued from the wood
Before the gate of Mortham stood.

'T was a fair scene! the sunbeam lay

On battled tower and portal gray;
And from the grassy slope he sees

The Greta flow to meet the Tees
Where, issuing from her darksome bed,

She caught the morning's eastern red,

And through the softening vale below ³⁷⁰

Rolled her bright waves in rosy glow,

All blushing to her bridal bed,
Like some shy maid in convent bred,

While linnet, lark, and blackbird gay

Sing forth her nuptial roundelay.

XVII

'T was sweetly sung that roundelay,

That summer morn shone blithe and gay;

But morning beam and wild-bird's call

Awaked not Mortham's silent hall. ³⁷⁹

No porter by the low-browed gate
Took in the wonted niche his seat;

To the paved court no peasant drew;

Waked to their toil no menial crew;

The maiden's carol was not heard,
As to her morning task she fared:
In the void offices around

Rung not a hoof nor bayed a
hound;
Nor eager steed with shrilling
neigh
Accused the lagging groom's de-
lay;
Untrimmed, undressed, neglected
now, 390
Was alleys walk and orchard
bough;
All spoke the master's absent care,
All spoke neglect and disrepair.
South of the gate an arrow flight,
Two mighty elms their limbs unite
As if a canopy to spread
O'er the lone dwelling of the dead;
For their huge boughs in arches
bent
Above a massive monument, 399
Carved o'er in ancient Gothic wise
With many a scutcheon and de-
vice:
There, spent with toil and sunk in
gloom,
Bertram stood pondering by the
tomb.

XVIII

'It vanished like a flitting ghost!
Behind this tomb,' he said, 't was
lost—
This tomb where oft I deemed lies
stored
Of Mortham's Indian wealth the
hoard.
'T is true, the aged servants said
Here his lamented wife is laid;
But weightier reasons may be
guessed 410
For their lord's strict and stern
behest
That none should on his steps in-
trude
Whene'er he sought this solitude.
An ancient mariner I knew,
What time I sailed with Morgan's
crew,
Who oft mid our carousals spake
Of Raleigh, Frobisher, and Drake;
Adventurous hearts! who bar-
tered, bold,

Their English steel for Spanish
gold.
Trust not, would his experience
say, 420
Captain or comrade with your
prey,
But seek some charnel, when, at
full,
The moon gilds skeleton and
skull:
There dig and tomb your precious
heap,
And bid the dead your treasure
keep;
Sure stewards they, if fitting spell
Their service to the task com-
pel.
Lacks there such charnel?—kill a
slave
Or prisoner on the treasure-grave,
And bid his discontented ghost 430
Stalk nightly on his lonely post.
Such was his tale. Its truth, I
ween,
Is in my morning vision seen.'

XIX

Wilfrid, who scorned the legend
wild,
In mingled mirth and pity smiled,
Much marvelling that a breast so
bold
In such fond tale belief should
hold,
But yet of Bertram sought to
know
The apparition's form and show.
The power within the guilty
breast, 440
Oft vanquished, never quite sup-
pressed,
That unsubdued and lurking lies
To take the felon by surprise
And force him, as by magic spell,
In his despite his guilt to tell—
That power in Bertram's breast
awoke;
Scarce conscious he was heard,
he spoke;
'T was Mortham's form, from foot
to head!

His morion with the plume of red,
 His shape, his mien — 't was Mor-
 tham, right 450
 As when I slew him in the fight.' —
 'Thou slay him? — thou?' — With
 conscious start
 He heard, then manned his haugh-
 ty heart —
 'I slew him? — I! — I had forgot
 Thou, stripling, knew'st not of
 the plot.
 But it is spoken — nor will I
 Deed done or spoken word deny.
 I slew him; I! for thankless
 pride;
 'T was by this hand that Mortham
 died.'

XX

Wilfrid, of gentle hand and heart,
 Averse to every active part, 461
 But most averse to martial broil,
 From danger shrunk and turned
 from toil;
 Yet the meek lover of the lyre
 Nursed one brave spark of noble
 fire;
 Against injustice, fraud, or wrong
 His blood beat high, his hand
 waxed strong.
 Not his the nerves that could sus-
 tain,
 Unshaken, danger, toil, and pain;
 But, when that spark blazed forth
 to flame, 470
 He rose superior to his frame.
 And now it came, that generous
 mood;
 And, in full current of his blood,
 On Bertram he laid desperate
 hand,
 Placed firm his foot, and drew his
 brand.
 'Should every fiend to whom
 thou 'rt sold
 Rise in thine aid, I keep my
 hold. —
 Arouse there, ho! take spear and
 sword!
 Attach the murderer of your lord!'

XXI

A moment, fixed as by a spell, 480
 Stood Bertram — it seemed mira-
 cle,
 That one so feeble, soft, and tame
 Set grasp on warlike Risingham.
 But when he felt a feeble stroke
 The fiend within the ruffian woke!
 To wrench the sword from Wil-
 frid's hand,
 To dash him headlong on the sand,
 Was but one moment's work, —
 one more
 Had drenched the blade in Wil-
 frid's gore.
 But in the instant it arose 490
 To end his life, his love, his woes,
 A warlike form that marked the
 scene
 Presents his rapier sheathed be-
 tween,
 Parries the fast-descending blow,
 And steps 'twixt Wilfrid and his
 foe;
 Nor then unsabarded his brand,
 But, sternly pointing with his
 hand,
 With monarch's voice forbade the
 fight,
 And motioned Bertram from his
 sight.
 'Go, and repent,' he said, 'while
 time 500
 Is given thee; add not crime to
 crime.'

XXII

Mute and uncertain and amazed,
 As on a vision Bertram gazed!
 'T was Mortham's bearing, bold
 and high,
 His sinewy frame, his falcon eye,
 His look and accent of command,
 The martial gesture of his hand,
 His stately form, spare-built and
 tall,
 His war-bleached locks — 't was
 Mortham all.
 Through Bertram's dizzy brain
 career 510

A thousand thoughts, and all of
 fear ;
 His wavering faith received not
 quite
 The form he saw as Mortham's
 sprite,
 But more he feared it if it stood
 His lord in living flesh and blood.
 What spectre can the charnel send,
 So dreadful as an injured friend ?
 Then, too, the habit of command,
 Used by the leader of the band
 When Risingham for many a
 day 520
 Had marched and fought beneath
 his sway,
 Tamed him — and with reverted
 face
 Backwards he bore his sullen
 pace,
 Oft stopped, and oft on Mortham
 stared,
 And dark as rated mastiff glared,
 But when the tramp of steeds was
 heard,
 Plunged in the glen and disap-
 peared ;
 Nor longer there the warrior stood,
 Retiring eastward through the
 wood,
 But first to Wilfrid warning
 gives, 530
 'Tell thou to none that Mortham
 lives.'

XXIII

Still rung these words in Wilfrid's
 ear,
 Hinting he knew not what of fear,
 When nearer came the coursers'
 tread,
 And, with his father at their head,
 Of horsemen armed a gallant
 power
 Reined up their steeds before the
 tower.
 'Whence these pale looks, my
 son?' he said :
 'Where's Bertram? Why that
 naked blade?'
 Wilfrid ambiguously replied — 540

For Mortham's charge his honor
 tied —
 'Bertram is gone — the villain's
 word
 Avouched him murderer of his
 lord !
 Even now we fought — but when
 your tread
 Announced you nigh, the felon
 fled.'
 In Wycliffe's conscious eye ap-
 pear
 A guilty hope, a guilty fear ;
 On his pale brow the dewdrop
 broke,
 And his lip quivered as he spoke :

XXIV

'A murderer! — Philip Mortham
 died 550
 Amid the battle's wildest tide.
 Wilfrid, or Bertram raves or you !
 Yet, grant such strange confession
 true,
 Pursuit were vain — let him fly
 far —
 Justice must sleep in civil war.'
 A gallant youth rode near his
 side,
 Brave Rokeby's page, in battle
 tried ;
 That morn an embassy of weight
 He brought to Barnard's castle
 gate,
 And followed now in Wycliffe's
 train 560
 An answer for his lord to gain.
 His steed, whose arched and sable
 neck
 An hundred wreaths of foam be-
 deck,
 Chafed not against the curb more
 high
 Than he at Oswald's cold reply ;
 He bit his lip, implored his saint —
 His the old faith — then burst re-
 straint :

XXV

'Yes ! I beheld his bloody fall
 By that base traitor's dastard ball

Just when I thought to measure
sword, 570

Presumptuous hope! with Mor-
tham's lord.

And shall the murderer'scape who
slew

His leader, generous, brave, and
true?

Escape, while on the dew you
trace

The marks of his gigantic pace?

No! ere the sun that dew shall
dry,

False Risingham shall yield or
die. —

Ring out the castle larum bell!

Arouse the peasants with the
knell!

Meantime disperse — ride, gallants,
ride! 580

Beset the wood on every side.

But if among you one there be

That honors Mortham's memory,

Let him dismount and follow me!

Else on your crests sit fear and
shame,

And foul suspicion dog your name!

XXVI

Instant to earth young REDMOND
sprung;

Instant on earth the harness rung
Of twenty men of Wycliffe's band,

Who waited not their lord's com-
mand. 590

Redmond his spurs from buskins
drew,

His mantle from his shoulders
threw,

His pistols in his belt he placed,

The green-wood gained, the foot-
steps traced,

Shouted like huntsman to his
hounds,

'To cover, hark!' — and in he
bounds.

Scarce heard was Oswald's anx-
ious cry,

'Suspicion! yes — pursue him —
fly —

But venture not in useless strife

On ruffian desperate of his life; 600
Whoever finds him shoot him dead!
Five hundred nobles for his head!

XXVII

The horsemen galloped to make
good

Each path that issued from the
wood.

Loud from the thickets rung the
shout

Of Redmond and his eager rout;

With them was Wilfrid, stung
with ire,

And envying Redmond's martial
fire,

And emulous of fame. — But where
Is Oswald, noble Mortham's

heir? 610

He, bound by honor, law, and
faith,

Avenger of his kinsman's death? —
Leaning against the elmin tree,

With drooping head and slackened
knee,

And clenched teeth, and close-
clasped hands,

In agony of soul he stands!

His downcast eye on earth is bent,

His soul to every sound is lent;

For in each shout that cleaves the
air

May ring discovery and despair.

XXVIII

What 'vailed it him that brightly
played 621

The morning sun on Mortham's
glade?

All seems in giddy round to ride,

Like objects on a stormy tide

Seen eddying by the moonlight
dim,

Imperfectly to sink and swim.

What 'vailed it that the fair do-
main,

Its battled mansion, hill, and plain,
On which the sun so brightly

shone,

Envied so long, was now his own?

The lowest dungeon, in that hour,

Of Brackenbury's dismal tower, ⁶³²
Had been his choice, could such a
doom

Have opened Mortham's bloody
tomb!

Forced, too, to turn unwilling ear
To each surmise of hope or fear,
Murmured among the rustics
round,

Who gathered at the larum sound,
He dare not turn his head away,
Even to look up to heaven to pray,
Or call on hell in bitter mood ⁶⁴¹
For one sharp death-shot from the
wood!

XXIX

At length o'erpast that dreadful
space,

Back straggling came the scat-
tered chase;

Jaded and weary, horse and man,
Returned the troopers one by one.
Wilfrid the last arrived to say
All trace was lost of Bertram's
way,

Though Redmond still up Brignall
wood

The hopeless quest in vain pur-
sued. ⁶⁵⁰

O, fatal doom of human race!

What tyrant passions passions
chase!

Remorse from Oswald's brow is
gone,

Avarice and pride resume their
throne;

The pang of instant terror by,
They dictate thus their slave's re-
ply:

XXX

'Ay—let him range like hasty
hound!

And if the grim wolf's lair be
found,

Small is my care how goes the
game

With Redmond or with Rising-
ham.— ⁶⁶⁰

Nay, answer not, thou simple boy!

Thy fair Matilda, all so coy
To thee, is of another mood
To that bold youth of Erin's blood.
Thy ditties will she freely praise,
And pay thy pains with courtly
phrase;

In a rough path will oft com-
mand—

Accept at least—thy friendly
hand;

His she avoids, or, urged and
prayed,

Unwilling takes his proffered aid,
While conscious passion plainly
speaks ⁶⁷¹

In downcast look and blushing
cheeks.

Whene'er he sings will she glide
nigh,

And all her soul is in her eye;
Yet doubts she still to tender free
The wonted words of courtesy.

These are strong signs!—yet
wherefore sigh,

And wipe, effeminate, thine eye?
Thine shall she be, if thou attend
The counsels of thy sire and
friend. ⁶⁸⁰

XXXI

'Scarce wert thou gone, when peep
of light

Brought genuine news of Mars-
ton's fight.

Brave Cromwell turned the doubt-
ful tide,

And conquest blessed the rightful
side;

Three thousand cavaliers lie dead,
Rupert and that bold Marquis fled;
Nobles and knights, so proud of
late,

Must fine for freedom and estate.
Of these committed to my charge

Is Rokeby, prisoner at large; ⁶⁹⁰
Redmond his page arrived to say

He reaches Barnard's towers to-
day.

Right heavy shall his ransom be
Unless that maid compound with
thee!

Go to her now — be bold of cheer
 While her soul floats 'twixt hope
 and fear;
 It is the very change of tide,
 When best the female heart is
 tried —
 Pride, prejudice, and modesty,
 Are in the current swept to sea, 700
 And the bold swain who plies his
 oar
 May lightly row his bark to shore.'

CANTO THIRD

I

THE hunting tribes of air and
 earth
 Respect the brethren of their
 birth;
 Nature, who loves the claim of
 kind,
 Less cruel chase to each assigned.
 The falcon, poised on soaring wing,
 Watches the wild-duck by the
 spring;
 The slow-hound wakes the fox's
 lair;
 The greyhound presses on the
 hare;
 The eagle pounces on the lamb;
 The wolf devours the fleecy dam:
 Even tiger fell and sullen bear 11
 Their likeness and their lineage
 spare;
 Man only mars kind Nature's plan,
 And turns the fierce pursuit on
 man,
 Plying war's desultory trade,
 Incursion, flight, and ambushade,
 Since Nimrod, Cush's mighty son,
 At first the bloody game begun.

II

The Indian, prowling for his prey,
 Who hears the settlers track his
 way, 20
 And knows in distant forest far
 Camp his red brethren of the
 war —

He, when each double and dis-
 guise
 To baffle the pursuit he tries,
 Low crouching now his head to
 hide
 Where swampy streams through
 rushes glide,
 Now covering with the withered
 leaves
 The foot-prints that the dew re-
 ceives —
 He, skilled in every sylvan guile,
 Knows not, nor tries, such various
 wile 30
 As Risingham when on the wind
 Arose the loud pursuit behind.
 In Redesdale his youth had heard
 Each art her wily dalesman dared,
 When Rook-edge and Redswair
 high
 To bugle rung and blood-hound's
 cry,
 Announcing Jedwood-axe and
 spear,
 And Lid'sdale riders in the rear;
 And well his venturous life had
 proved
 The lessons that his childhood
 loved. 40

III

Oft had he shown in climes afar
 Each attribute of roving war;
 The sharpened ear, the piercing
 eye,
 The quick resolve in danger nigh;
 The speed that in the flight or
 chase
 Outstripped the Charib's rapid
 race;
 The steady brain, the sinewy
 limb,
 To leap, to climb, to dive, to swim;
 The iron frame, inured to bear
 Each dire inclemency of air, 50
 Nor less confirmed to undergo
 Fatigue's faint chill and famine's
 throe.
 These arts he proved, his life to
 save,
 In peril oft by land and wave,

On Arawaca's desert shore,
 Or where La Plata's billows roar,
 When oft the sons of vengeful
 Spain
 Tracked the marauder's steps in
 vain.
 These arts, in Indian warfare
 tried,
 Must save him now by Greta's
 side. 60

IV

'T was then, in hour of utmost
 need,
 He proved his courage, art, and
 speed.
 Now slow he stalked with stealthy
 pace,
 Now started forth in rapid race,
 Oft doubling back in mazy train
 To blind the trace the dews retain;
 Now clomb the rocks projecting
 high
 To baffle the pursuer's eye;
 Now sought the stream, whose
 brawling sound 69
 The echo of his footsteps drowned.
 But if the forest verge he nears,
 There trample steeds, and glim-
 mer spears;
 If deeper down the copse he drew,
 He heard the rangers' loud halloo,
 Beating each cover while they
 came,
 As if to start the sylvan game.
 'T was then—like tiger close be-
 set
 At every pass with toil and net,
 'Countered where'er he turns his
 glare
 By clashing arms and torches'
 flare, 80
 Who meditates with furious bound
 To burst on hunter, horse and
 hound—
 'T was then that Bertram's soul
 arose,
 Prompting to rush upon his foes:
 But as that crouching tiger, cowed
 By brandished steel and shouting
 crowd,

Retreats beneath the jungle's
 shroud,
 Bertram suspends his purpose
 stern,
 And crouches in the brake and
 fern,
 Hiding his face lest foemen spy 90
 The sparkle of his swarthy eye.

V

Then Bertram might the bearing
 trace
 Of the bold youth who led the
 chase;
 Who paused to list for every
 sound,
 Climbed every height to look
 around,
 Then rushing on with naked
 sword,
 Each dingle's bosky depths ex-
 plored.
 'T was Redmond—by the azure
 eye;
 'T was Redmond—by the locks
 that fly
 Disordered from his glowing
 cheek; 100
 Mien, face, and form young Red-
 mond speak.
 A form more active, light, and
 strong,
 Ne'er shot the ranks of war along;
 The modest yet the manly mien
 Might grace the court of maiden
 queen;
 A face more fair you well might
 find,
 For Redmond's knew the sun and
 wind,
 Nor boasted, from their tinge when
 free,
 The charm of regularity; 109
 But every feature had the power
 To aid the expression of the hour:
 Whether gay wit and humor sly
 Danced laughing in his light-blue
 eye,
 Or bended brow and glance of fire
 And kindling cheek spoke Erin's
 ire,

Or soft and saddened glances show
Her ready sympathy with woe;
Or in that wayward mood of mind
When various feelings are com-
bined, 119

When joy and sorrow mingle near,
And hope's bright wings are
checked by fear,

And rising doubts keep transport
down,

And anger lends a short-lived
frown;

In that strange mood which maids
approve

Even when they dare not call it
love —

With every change his features
played,

As aspens show the light and
shade.

VI

Well Risingham young Redmond
knew,

And much he marvelled that the
crew,

Roused to revenge bold Mortham
dead 130

Were by that Mortham's foeman
led;

For never felt his soul the woe
That wails a generous foeman
low,

Far less that sense of justice
strong

That wrecks a generous foeman's
wrong.

But small his leisure now to pause;
Redmond is first, whate'er the
cause:

And twice that Redmond came so
near

Where Bertram couched like
hunted deer,

The very boughs his steps dis-
place 140

Rustled against the ruffian's face,
Who desperate twice prepared to
start,

And plunge his dagger in his
heart!

But Redmond turned a different
way,

And the bent boughs resumed
their sway,

And Bertram held it wise, un-
seen,

Deeper to plunge in coppice green.
Thus, circled in his coil, the snake,

When roving hunters beat the
brake,

Watches with red and glistening
eye, 150

Prepared, if heedless step draw
nigh,

With forked tongue and venomed
fang

Instant to dart the deadly pang;
But if the intruders turn aside,

Away his coils unfolded glide,
And through the deep savannah
wind,

Some undisturbed retreat to find.

VII

But Bertram, as he backward drew,
And heard the loud pursuit re-
new,

And Redmond's hollo on the wind,
Oft muttered in his savage mind —

'Redmond O'Neale! were thou
and I 162

Alone this day's event to try,
With not a second here to see

But the gray cliff and oaken tree,
That voice of thine that shouts so
loud

Should ne'er repeat its summons
proud!

No! nor e'er try its melting power
Again in maiden's summer bower.'

Eluded, now behind him die 170

Faint and more faint each hostile
cry;

He stands in Scargill wood alone,
Nor hears he now a harsher tone

Than the hoarse cushat's plaintive
cry,

Or Greta's sound that murmurs
by;

And on the dale, so lone and wild,
The summer sun in quiet smiled.

VIII

He listened long with anxious heart,

Ear bent to hear and foot to start,
And, while his stretched attention
glows, 180

Refused his weary frame repose.
'T was silence all — he laid him
down,

Where purple heath profusely
strown,

And throatwort with its azure
bell,

And moss and thyme his cushion
swell.

There, spent with toil, he listless
eyed

The course of Greta's playful tide;
Beneath her banks now eddying
dun, 188

Now brightly gleaming to the sun,
As, dancing over rock and stone,
In yellow light her currents shone,
Matching in hue the favorite gem
Of Albin's mountain-diadem.

Then, tired to watch the currents
play,

He turned his weary eyes away
To where the bank opposing
showed

Its huge, square cliffs through
shaggy wood.

One, prominent above the rest,
Reared to the sun its pale gray
breast; 199

Around its broken summit grew
The hazel rude and sable yew;
A thousand varied lichens dyed
Its waste and weather-beaten side,
And round its rugged basis lay,
By time or thunder rent away,
Fragments that from its frontlet
torn

Were mantled now by verdant
thorn.

Such was the scene's wild majesty
That filled stern Bertram's gazing
eye.

IX

In sullen mood he lay reclined, 210
Revolving in his stormy mind

The felon deed, the fruitless guilt,
His patron's blood by treason
spilt;

A crime, it seemed, so dire and
dread

That it had power to wake the
dead.

Then, pondering on his life be-
trayed

By Oswald's art to Redmond's
blade,

In treacherous purpose to with-
hold,

So seemed it, Mortham's promised
gold,

A deep and full revenge he vowed
On Redmond, forward, fierce, and
proud; 221

Revenge on Wilfrid — on his sire
Redoubled vengeance, swift and
dire! —

If, in such mood — as legends say,
And well believed that simple
day —

The Enemy of Man has power
To profit by the evil hour,
Here stood a wretch prepared to
change

His soul's redemption for revenge!
But though his vows with such a
fire 230

Of earnest and intense desire
For vengeance dark and fell were
made

As well might reach hell's lowest
shade,

No deeper clouds the grove em-
browned,

No nether thunders shook the
ground;

The demon knew his vassal's heart,
And spared temptation's needless
art.

X

Of, mingled with the direful
theme,

Came Mortham's form — was it a
dream?

Or had he seen in vision true 240
That very Mortham whom he slew?
Or had in living flesh appeared

The only man on earth he
feared?—

To try the mystic cause intent,
His eyes that on the cliff were
bent

Countered at once a dazzling
glance,

Like sunbeam flashed from sword
or lance.

At once he started as for fight,
But not a foeman was in sight;

He heard the cushat's murmur
hoarse, 250

He heard the river's sounding
course;

The solitary woodlands lay,
As slumbering in the summer
ray.

He gazed, like lion roused, around,
Then sunk again upon the ground.

'T was but, he thought, some fitful
beam,

Glanced sudden from the sparkling
stream;

Then plunged him in his gloomy
train

Of ill-connected thoughts again,
Until a voice behind him cried, 260

'Bertram! well met on Greta side.'

XI

Instant his sword was in his hand,
As instant sunk the ready brand;
Yet, dubious still, opposed he
stood

To him that issued from the wood:
'Guy Denzil!—is it thou?' he said;
'Do we two meet in Scargill
shade!—

Stand back a space!—thy purpose
show,

Whether thou comest as friend or
foe.

Report hath said, that Denzil's
name 270

From Rokeby's band was razed
with shame'—

'A shame I owe that hot O'Neale,
Who told his knight in peevish
zeal

Of my marauding on the clowns

Of Calverley and Bradford downs.
I reckon not. In a war to strive,

Where save the leaders none can
thrive,

Suits ill my mood; and better
game

Awaits us both, if thou 'rt the
same 279

Unscrupulous, bold Risingham
Who watched with me in midnight
dark

To snatch a deer from Rokeby-
park.

How think'st thou?'—'Speak thy
purpose out;

I love not mystery or doubt.'

XII

'Then list. — Not far there lurk a
crew

Of trusty comrades stanch and
true,

Gleaned from both factions —
Roundheads freed

From cant of sermon and of creed
And Cavaliers, whose souls like
mine 289

Spurn at the bonds of discipline.
Wiser, we judge, by dale and wold

A warfare of our own to hold
Than breathe our last on battle-
down

For cloak or surplice, mace or
crown.

Our schemes are laid, our purpose
set,

A chief and leader lack we yet.
Thou art a wanderer, it is said,

For Mortham's death thy steps
waylaid,

Thy head at price — so say our
spies,

Who ranged the valley in dis-
guise. 300

Join then with us: though wild
debate

And wrangling rend our infant
state,

Each, to an equal loath to bow,
Will yield to chief renowned as
thou.'—

XIII

'Even now,' thought Bertram,
passion-stirred,

'I called on hell, and hell has
heard!

What lack I, vengeance to com-
mand,

But of staunch comrades such a
band?

This Denzil, vowed to every evil,
Might read a lesson to the devil.

Well, be it so! each knave and
fool

Shall serve as my revenge's
tool.' — 311

Aloud, 'I take thy proffer, Guy,
But tell me where thy comrades
lie.'

'Not far from hence,' Guy Denzil
said;

'Descend and cross the river's bed
Where rises yonder cliff so gray.'

'Do thou,' said Bertram, 'lead the
way.'

Then muttered, 'It is best make
sure;

Guy Denzil's faith was never
pure.' 320

He followed down the steep de-
scent,

Then through the Greta's streams
they went;

And when they reached the far-
ther shore

They stood the lonely cliff before.

XIV

With wonder Bertram heard
within

The flinty rock a murmured din;
But when Guy pulled the wilding
spray

And brambles from its base away,
He saw appearing to the air

A little entrance low and
square, 330

Like opening cell of hermit lone,
Dark winding through the living
stone.

Here entered Denzil, Bertram
here;

And loud and louder on their ear,
As from the bowels of the earth,
Resounded shouts of boisterous
mirth.

Of old the cavern strait and rude
In slaty rock the peasant hewed;
And Brignall's woods and Scar-
gill's wave

E'en now o'er many a sister
cave, 340

Where, far within the darksome
rift,

The wedge and lever ply their
thrift.

But war had silenced rural trade,
And the deserted mine was made
The banquet-hall and fortress too
Of Denzil and his desperate crew.

There Guilt his anxious revel kept,
There on his sordid pallet slept

Guilt-born Excess, the goblet
drained

Still in his slumbering grasp re-
tained; 350

Regret was there, his eye still cast
With vain repining on the past;

Among the feasters waited near
Sorrow and unrepentant Fear,

And Blasphemy, to frenzy driven,
With his own crimes reproaching

Heaven;

While Bertram showed amid the
crew

The Master-Fiend that Milton
drew.

XV

Hark! the loud revel wakes again
To greet the leader of the train. 360
Behold the group by the pale lamp
That struggles with the earthy
damp.

By what strange features Vice
hath known

To single out and mark her own!
Yet some there are whose brows
retain

Less deeply stamped her brand
and stain.

See yon pale stripling! when a
boy,

A mother's pride, a father's joy !
Now, 'gainst the vault's rude walls
reclined,

An early image fills his mind : 370
The cottage once his sire's he sees,
Embowered upon the banks of
Tees ;

He views sweet Winston's wood-
land scene,
And shares the dance on Gainford-
green.

A tear is springing — but the zest
Of some wild tale or brutal jest
Hath to loud laughter stirred the
rest.

On him they call, the aptest mate
For jovial song and merry feat :
Fast flies his dream — with daunt-
less air, 380

As one victorious o'er despair,
He bids the ruddy cup go round
Till sense and sorrow both are
drowned ;

And soon in merry wassail he,
The life of all their revelry,
Peals his loud song ! — The muse
has found

Her blossoms on the wildest
ground,

Mid noxious weeds at random
strewn,

Themselves all profitless and
rude. —

With desperate merriment he
sung, 390

The cavern to the chorus rung,
Yet mingled with his reckless glee
Remorse's bitter agony.

XVI

SONG

O, Brignall banks are wild and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands
there

Would grace a summer queen.
And as I rode by Dalton-hall,
Beneath the turrets high,
A maiden on the castle wall 400
Was singing merrily, —

CHORUS

' O, Brignall banks are fresh and
fair,
And Greta woods are green ;
I'd rather rove with Edmund
there
Than reign our English queen.'

' If, maiden, thou wouldst wend
with me,

To leave both tower and town,
Thou first must guess what life
lead we

That dwell by dale and down ?
And if thou canst that riddle
read, 410

As read full well you may,
Then to the greenwood shalt thou
speed,

As blithe as Queen of May.'

CHORUS

Yet sung she, ' Brignall banks are
fair,
And Greta woods are green ;
I'd rather rove with Edmund
there
Than reign our English queen.

XVII

' I read you, by your bugle horn,
And by your palfrey good,
I read you for a ranger sworn 420
To keep the king's greenwood.'

' A ranger, lady, winds his horn,
And 't is at peep of light ;
His blast is heard at merry morn,
And mine at dead of night.'

CHORUS

Yet sung she, ' Brignall banks are
fair,
And Greta woods are gay ;
I would I were with Edmund
there,
To reign his Queen of May !

' With burnished brand and mus-
ketoon 430
So gallantly you come,

I read you for a bold dragoon,
That lists the tuck of drum.'
'I list no more the tuck of drum,
No more the trumpet hear;
But when the beetle sounds his hum,
My comrades take the spear.

CHORUS

'And O, though Brignall banks be fair,
And Greta woods be gay,
Yet mickle must the maiden dare 440
Would reign my Queen of May!

XVIII

'Maiden! a nameless life I lead,
A nameless death I'll die;
The fiend whose lantern lights the mead
Were better mate than I!
And when I'm with my comrades met
Beneath the greenwood bough,
What once we were we all forget,
Nor think what we are now.

CHORUS

'Yet Brignall banks are fresh and fair, 450
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there
Would grace a summer queen.'

When Edmund ceased his simple song,
Was silence on the sullen throng,
Till waked some ruder mate their glee
With note of coarser minstrelsy.
But far apart in dark divan,
Denzil and Bertram many a plan
Of import foul and fierce designed,
While still on Bertram's grasping mind 461
The wealth of murdered Mortham hung;
Though half he feared his daring tongue,

When it should give his wishes birth,
Might raise a spectre from the earth!

XIX

At length his wondrous tale he told;
When scornful smiled his comrade bold,
For, trained in license of a court,
Religion's self was Denzil's sport;
Then judge in what contempt he held 470
The visionary tales of eld!
His awe for Bertram scarce repressed
The unbeliever's sneering jest,
'T were hard,' he said, 'for sage or seer
To spell the subject of your fear;
Nor do I boast the art renowned
Vision and omen to expound.
Yet, faith if I must needs afford
To spectre watching treasured hoard,
As ban-dog keeps his master's roof, 480
Bidding the plunderer stand aloof,
This doubt remains—thy goblin gaunt
Hath chosen ill his ghostly haunt;
For why his guard on Mortham hold,
When Rokeby castle hath the gold
Thy patron won on Indian soil
By stealth, by piracy, and spoil?'—

XX

At this he paused—for angry shame
Lowered on the brow of Rising-ham.
He blushed to think, that he should seem 490
Assertor of an airy dream,
And gave his wrath another theme.

'Denzil,' he says, 'though lowly
laid,
Wrong not the memory of the
dead;
For while he lived at Mortham's
look
Thy very soul, Guy Denzil, shook!
And when he taxed thy breach of
word
To yon fair rose of Allenford,
I saw thee crouch like chastened
hound
Whose back the huntsman's lash
hath found. 500
Nor dare to call his foreign wealth
The spoil of piracy or stealth;
He won it bravely with his brand
When Spain waged warfare with
our land.
Mark, too — I brook no idle jeer,
Nor couple Bertram's name with
fear;
Mine is but half the demon's lot,
For I believe, but tremble not.
Enough of this. Say, why this
hoard
Thou deem'st at Rokeby castle
stored; 510
Or think'st that Mortham would
bestow
His treasure with his faction's
foe?'

XXI

Soon quenched was Denzil's ill-
timed mirth;
Rather he would have seen the
earth
Give to ten thousand spectres
birth
Than venture to awake to flame
The deadly wrath of Risingham.
Submiss he answered, 'Mortham's
mind,
Thou know'st, to joy was ill in-
clined, 519
In youth, 'tis said, a gallant free,
A lusty reveller was he;
But since returned from over
sea,
A sullen and a silent mood

Hath numbed the current of his
blood.
Hence he refused each kindly call
To Rokeby's hospitable hall,
And our stout knight, at dawn or
morn
Who loved to hear the bugle-horn,
Nor less, when eve his oaks em-
browned,
To see the ruddy cup go round, 530
Took umbrage that a friend so
near
Refused to share his chase and
cheer;
Thus did the kindred barons jar
Ere they divided in the war.
Yet, trust me, friend, Matilda fair
Of Mortham's wealth is destined
heir.'

XXII

'Destined to her! to yon slight
maid!
The prize my life had wellnigh
paid
When 'gainst Laroche by Cayo's
wave
I fought my patron's wealth to
save! — 540
Denzil, I knew him long, yet ne'er
Knew him that joyous cavalier
Whom youthful friends and early
fame
Called soul of gallantry and game.
A moody man he sought our crew,
Desperate and dark, whom no one
knew,
And rose, as men with us must
rise,
By scorning life and all its ties.
On each adventure rash he roved,
As danger for itself he loved; 550
On his sad brow nor mirth nor
wine
Could e'er one wrinkled knot un-
twine;
Ill was the omen if he smiled,
For 't was in peril stern and wild;
But when he laughed each luck-
less mate
Might hold our fortune desperate.

Foremost he fought in every broil,
 Then scornful turned him from
 the spoil,
 Nay, often strove to bar the way
 Between his comrades and their
 prey; 560
 Preaching even then to such as
 we,
 Hot with our dear-bought victory,
 Of mercy and humanity.

XXIII

'I loved him well — his fearless
 part,
 His gallant leading, won my heart.
 And after each victorious fight,
 'Twas I that wrangled for his
 right,
 Redeemed his portion of the prey
 That greedier mates had torn
 away,
 In field and storm thrice saved his
 life, 570
 And once amid our comrades'
 strife. —
 Yes, I have loved thee! Well hath
 proved
 My toil, my danger, how I loved!
 Yet will I mourn no more thy fate,
 Ingrate in life, in death ingrate.
 Rise if thou canst!' he looked
 around
 And sternly stamped upon the
 ground —
 'Rise, with thy bearing proud and
 high,
 Even as this morn it met mine
 eye,
 And give me, if thou darest, the
 lie!' 580
 He paused — then, calm and pas-
 sion-freed,
 Bade Denzil with his tale pro-
 ceed.

XXIV

'Bertram, to thee I need not tell,
 What thou hast cause to wot so
 well,
 How superstition's nets were
 twined

Around the Lord of Mortham's
 mind;
 But since he drove thee from his
 tower,
 A maid he found in Greta's bower
 Whose speech, like David's harp,
 had sway
 To charm his evil fiend away. 590
 I know not if her features moved
 Remembrance of the wife he loved,
 But he would gaze upon her eye,
 Till his mood softened to a sigh.
 He, whom no living mortal sought
 To question of his secret thought,
 Now every thought and care con-
 fessed
 To his fair niece's faithful breast;
 Nor was there aught of rich and
 rare,
 In earth, in ocean, or in air, 600
 But it must deck Matilda's hair.
 Her love still bound him unto
 life;
 But then awoke the civil strife,
 And menials bore by his com-
 mands
 Three coffers with their iron
 bands
 From Mortham's vault at midnight
 deep
 To her lone bower in Rokeby-
 Keep,
 Ponderous with gold and plate of
 pride,
 His gift, if he in battle died.'

XXV

'Then Denzil, as I guess, lays
 train 610
 These iron-banded chests to gain,
 Else wherefore should he hover
 here
 Where many a peril waits him
 near
 For all his feats of war and peace,
 For plundered boors, and harts of
 greese?
 Since through the hamlets as he
 fared
 What hearth has Guy's maraud-
 ing spared,

Or where the chase that hath not
rung

With Denzil's bow at midnight
strung?'

'I hold my wont — my rangers go,
Even now to track a milk-white
doe. 621

By Rokeby-hall she takes her lair,
In Greta wood she harbors fair,
And when my huntsman marks
her way,

What think'st thou, Bertram, of
the prey?

Were Rokeby's daughter in our
power,

We rate her ransom at her dower.'

XXVI

'T is well! — there 's vengeance
in the thought,

Matilda is by Wilfrid sought;
And hot-brained Redmond too, 't is
said, 630

Pays lover's homage to the maid.
Bertram she scorned — if met by
chance

She turned from me her shudder-
ing glance,

Like a nice dame that will not
brook

On what she hates and loathes to
look;

She told to Mortham she could
ne'er

Behold me without secret fear,
Foreboding evil: — she may rue
To find her prophecy fall true! —

The war has weeded Rokeby's
train, 640

Few followers in his halls remain;
If thy scheme miss, then, brief and
bold,

We are enow to storm the hold,
Bear off the plunder and the dame,
And leave the castle all in flame.'

XXVII

'Still art thou Valor's venturous
son!

Yet ponder first the risk to run:
The menials of the castle, true

And stubborn to their charge,
though few —

The wall to scale — the moat to
cross — 650

The wicket-grate — the inner
fosse' —

'Fool! if we blench for toys like
these,

On what fair guerdon can we
seize?

Our hardest venture, to explore
Some wretched peasant's fence-
less door,

And the best prize we bear away,
The earnings of his sordid day.'

'A while thy hasty taunt for-
bear:

In sight of road more sure and
fair

Thou wouldst not choose, in blind-
fold wrath 660

Or wantonness a desperate path?
List, then; — for vantage or as-
sault,

From gilded vane to dungeon
vault,

Each pass of Rokeby-house I
know:

There is one postern dark and
low

That issues at a secret spot,
By most neglected or forgot.

Now, could a spial of our train
On fair pretext admittance gain,

That sally-port might be unbarred;
Then, vain were battlement and
ward!' 671

XXVIII

'Now speak'st thou well: to me
the same

If force or art shall urge the
game;

Indifferent if like fox I wind,
Or spring like tiger on the hind. —

But, hark! our merry men so gay
Troll forth another roundelay.'

SONG

'A weary lot is thine, fair maid,
A weary lot is thine!

To pull the thorn thy brow to
braid, 680

And press the rue for wine!
A lightsome eye, a soldier's mien,
A feather of the blue,
A doublet of the Lincoln green, —
No more of me you knew,

My love!
No more of me you knew.

' This morn is merry June, I trow,
The rose is budding fain;
But she shall bloom in winter
snow 690

Ere we two meet again.'
He turned his charger as he spake
Upon the river shore,
He gave his bridle-reins a shake,
Said, ' Adieu for evermore,
My love!

And adieu for evermore.'

XXIX

' What youth is this your band
among 698
The best for minstrelsy and song?
In his wild notes seem aptly met
A strain of pleasure and regret.' —
' Edmund of Winston is his name;
The hamlet sounded with the fame
Of early hopes his childhood
gave, —

Now centred all in Brignall cave!
I watch him well — his wayward
course

Shows oft a tincture of remorse.
Some early love-shaft grazed his
heart,
And oft the scar will ache and
smart.

Yet is he useful; — of the rest 710
By fits the darling and the jest,
His harp, his story, and his lay,
Oft aid the idle hours away:
When unemployed, each fiery mate
Is ripe for mutinous debate.
He tuned his strings e'en now —
again

He wakes them with a blither
strain.'

XXX

SONG

ALLEN-A-DALE

Allen-a-Dale has no fagot for burn-
ing,

Allen-a-Dale has no furrow for
turning,

Allen-a-Dale has no fleece for the
spinning, 720

Yet Allen-a-Dale has red gold for
the winning.

Come, read me my riddle! come,
hearken my tale!

And tell me the craft of bold Allen-
a-Dale.

The Baron of Ravensworth prances
in pride,

And he views his domains upon
Arkindale side.

The mere for his net and the land
for his game,

The chase for the wild and the
park for the tame;

Yet the fish of the lake and the
deer of the vale

Are less free to Lord Dacre than
Allen-a-Dale!

Allen-a-Dale was ne'er belted a
knight, 730

Though his spur be as sharp and
his blade be as bright;

Allen-a-Dale is no baron or lord,
Yet twenty tall yeomen will draw
at his word;

And the best of our nobles his bon-
net will vail,

Who at Rere-cross on Stanmore
meets Allen-a-Dale!

Allen-a-Dale to his wooing is come;
The mother, she asked of his
household and home:

' Though the castle of Richmond
stand fair on the hill,

My hall,' quoth bold Allen, 'shows
gallanter still;

'Tis the blue vault of heaven,
with its crescent so pale 740
And with all its bright spangles!'
said Allen-a-Dale.

The father was steel and the mother was stone;
They lifted the latch and they bade him be gone;
But loud on the morrow their wail and their cry:
He had laughed on the lass with his bonny black eye,
And she fled to the forest to hear a love-tale,
And the youth it was told by was Allen-a-Dale!

XXXI

'Thou see'st that, whether sad or gay,

Love mingles ever in his lay. 749
But when his boyish wayward fit
Is o'er, he hath address and wit;
O, 'tis a brain of fire, can ape
Each dialect, each various shape!'—

'Nay, then, to aid thy project, Guy—

Soft! who comes here?'—'My trusty spy.

Speak, Hamlin! hast thou lodged our deer?'—

'I have—but two fair stags are near.

I watched her as she slowly strayed

From Egliston up Thorsgill glade,
But Wilfrid Wycliffe sought her side, 760

And then young Redmond in his pride

Shot down to meet them on their way;

Much, as it seemed, was theirs to say:

There's time to pitch both toil and net

Before their path be homeward set.'

A hurried and a whispered speech

Did Bertram's will to Denzil teach,
Who, turning to the robber band,
Bade four, the bravest, take the brand.

CANTO FOURTH

I

WHEN Denmark's raven soared on high,
Triumphant through Northumbrian sky,
Till hovering near her fatal croak
Bade Reged's Britons dread the yoke,
And the broad shadow of her wing
Blackened each cataract and spring
Where Tees in tumult leaves his source,
Thundering o'er Caldron and High-Force;
Beneath the shade the Northmen came, 9
Fixed on each vale a Runic name,
Reared high their altar's rugged stone,
And gave their gods the land they won.

Then, Balder, one bleak garth was thine
And one sweet brooklet's silver line,
And Woden's Croft did title gain
From the stern Father of the Slain;
But to the Monarch of the Mace,
That held in fight the foremost place,
To Odin's son and Sifa's spouse,
Near Stratforth high they paid their vows, 20
Remembered Thor's victorious fame,
And gave the dell the Thunderer's name.

II

Yet Scald or Kemper erred, I ween
Who gave that soft and quiet scene,

With all its varied light and shade,
And every little sunny glade,
And the blithe brook that strolls
along

Its pebbled bed with summer song,
To the grim God of blood and
scar,

The grisly King of Northern
War. 30

O, better were its banks assigned
To spirits of a gentler kind!

For where the thicket-groups re-
cede

And the rathe primrose decks the
mead,

The velvet grass seems carpet
meet

For the light fairies' lively feet.

Yon tufted knoll with daisies
strown

Might make proud Oberon a
throne,

While, hidden in the thicket nigh,
Puck should brood o'er his frolic
sly; 40

And where profuse the wood-vetch
clings

Round ash and elm in verdant
rings,

Its pale and azure-pencilled flower
Should canopy Titania's bower.

III

Here rise no cliffs the yale to
shade;

But, skirting every sunny glade,
In fair variety of green
The woodland lends its sylvan
screen.

Hoary yet haughty, frowns the
oak,

Its boughs by weight of ages
broke; 50

And towers erect in sable spire
The pine-tree scathed by lightning-
fire;

The drooping ash and birch be-
tween

Hang their fair tresses o'er the
green,

And all beneath at random grow

Each coppice dwarf of varied
show,

Or, round the stems profusely
twined,

Fling summer odors on the wind.

Such varied group Urbino's hand
Round Him of Tarsus nobly
planned, 60

What time he bade proud Athens
own

On Mars's Mount the God Un-
known!

Then gray Philosophy stood nigh,
Though bent by age, in spirit high:
There rose the scar-seamed veter-
an's spear,

There Grecian Beauty bent to hear,
While Childhood at her foot was
placed,

Or clung delighted to her waist.

IV

'And rest we here,' Matilda said,
And sat her in the varying
shade. 70

'Chance-met, we well may steal an
hour,

To friendship due from fortune's
power.

Thou, Wilfrid, ever kind, must lend
Thy counsel to thy sister-friend;
And, Redmond, thou, at my be-
hest,

No farther urge thy desperate
quest.

For to my care a charge is left,
Dangerous to one of aid bereft,
Wellnigh an orphan and alone,
Captive her sire, her house o'er-
thrown.' 80

Wilfrid, with wonted kindness
graced,

Beside her on the turf she placed;
Then paused with downcast look
and eye,

Nor bade young Redmond seat
him nigh.

Her conscious diffidence he saw,
Drew backward as in modest awe,
And sat a little space removed,
Unmarked to gaze on her he loved.

V

Wreathed in its dark-brown rings,
 her hair 89
 Half hid Matilda's forehead fair,
 Half hid and half revealed to view
 Her full dark eye of hazel hue.
 The rose with faint and feeble
 streak
 So slightly tinged the maiden's
 cheek
 That you had said her hue was
 pale;
 But if she faced the summer gale,
 Or spoke, or sung, or quicker
 moved,
 Or heard the praise of those she
 loved,
 Or when of interest was expressed
 Aught that waked feeling in her
 breast, 100
 The mantling blood in ready play
 Rivalled the blush of rising day.
 There was a soft and pensive
 grace,
 A cast of thought upon her face,
 That suited well the forehead high,
 The eyelash dark and downcast
 eye;
 The mild expression spoke a mind
 In duty firm, composed, re-
 signed;—
 'Tis that which Roman art has
 given,
 To mark their maiden Queen of
 Heaven. 110
 In hours of sport that mood gave
 way
 To Fancy's light and frolic play;
 And when the dance, or tale, or
 song
 In harmless mirth sped time along,
 Full oft her doting sire would call
 His Maud the merriest of them all.
 But days of war and civil crime
 Allowed but ill such festal time,
 And her soft pensiveness of brow
 Had deepened into sadness now.
 In Marston field her father ta'en,
 Her friends dispersed, brave Mor-
 tham slain, 122
 While every ill her soul foretold

From Oswald's thirst of power
 and gold,
 And boding thoughts that she
 must part
 With a soft vision of her heart,—
 All lowered around the lovely
 maid,
 To darken her dejection's shade.

VI

Who has not heard — while Erin
 yet
 Strove 'gainst the Saxon's iron
 bit — 130
 Who has not heard how brave
 O'Neale
 In English blood imbrued his steel,
 Against Saint George's cross
 blazed high
 The banners of his Tanistry,
 To fiery Essex gave the foil,
 And reigned a prince on Ulster's
 soil?
 But chief arose his victor pride
 When that brave Marshal fought
 and died,
 And Avon-Duff to ocean bore 139
 His billows red with Saxon gore.
 'T was first in that disastrous
 fight
 Rokeby and Mortham proved their
 might.
 There had they fallen amongst the
 rest,
 But pity touched a chieftain's
 breast;
 The Tanist he to great O'Neale,
 He checked his followers' bloody
 zeal,
 To quarter took the kinsmen bold,
 And bore them to his mountain-
 hold,
 Gave them each sylvan joy to
 know
 Slieve-Donard's cliffs and woods
 could show, 150
 Shared with them Erin's festal
 cheer,
 Showed them the chase of wolf
 and deer,
 And, when a fitting time was come

Safe and unransomed sent them
home,
Loaded with many a gift to prove
A generous foe's respect and love.

VII

Years speed away. On Rokeby's
head
Some touch of early snow was
shed;
Calm he enjoyed by Greta's wave
The peace which James the Peace-
ful gave, 160
While Mortham far beyond the
main
Waged his fierce wars on Indian
Spain. —
It chanced upon a wintry night
That whitened Stanmore's stormy
height,
The chase was o'er, the stag was
killed,
In Rokeby hall the cups were filled,
And by the huge stone chimney
sate
The knight in hospitable state.
Moonless the sky, the hour was
late,
When a loud summons shook the
gate, 170
And sore for entrance and for aid
A voice of foreign accent prayed.
The porter answered to the call,
And instant rushed into the hall
A man whose aspect and attire
Startled the circle by the fire.

VIII

His plaited hair in elf-locks spread
Around his bare and matted head;
On leg and thigh, close stretched
and trim,
His vesture showed the sinewy
limb; 180
In saffron dyed, a linen vest
Was frequent folded round his
breast;
A mantle long and loose he wore,
Shaggy with ice and stained with
gore.
He clasped a burden to his heart,

And, resting on a knotted dart,
The snow from hair and beard he
shook,
And round him gazed with wil-
dered look.

Then up the hall with staggering
pace 189

He hastened by the blaze to place,
Half lifeless from the bitter air,
His load, a boy of beauty rare.

To Rokeby next he louted low,
Then stood erect his tale to show
With wild majestic port and tone,
Like envoy of some barbarous
throne.

'Sir Richard, Lord of Rokeby,
hear!

Turlough O'Neale salutes thee
dear;

He graces thee, and to thy care
Young Redmond gives, his grand-
son fair. 200

He bids thee breed him as thy son,
For Turlough's days of joy are
done,

And other lords have seized his
land,

And faint and feeble is his hand,
And all the glory of Tyrone

Is like a morning vapor flown.

To bind the duty on thy soul,
He bids thee think on Erin's bowl!

If any wrong the young O'Neale,
He bids thee think of Erin's steel.

To Mortham first this charge was
due, 211

But in his absence honors you. —
Now is my master's message by,
And Ferraught will contented die.'

IX

His look grew fixed, his cheek
grew pale,

He sunk when he had told his tale;
For, hid beneath his mantle wide,

A mortal wound was in his side.
Vain was all aid — in terror wild

And sorrow screamed the orphan
child. 220

Poor Ferraught raised his wistful
eyes,

And faintly strove to soothe his
cries;
All reckless of his dying pain,
He blest and blest him o'er again,
And kissed the little hands out-
spread,
And kissed and crossed the infant
head,
And in his native tongue and
phrase
Prayed to each saint to watch his
days;
Then all his strength together
drew
The charge to Rokeby to renew.
When half was faltered from his
breast, 231
And half by dying signs expressed,
' Bless thee, O' Neale ! ' he faintly
said,
And thus the faithful spirit fled.

X

'T was long ere soothing might
prevail
Upon the child to end the tale :
And then he said that from his
home
His grandsire had been forced to
roam,
Which had not been if Redmond's
hand
Had but had strength to draw the
brand, 240
The brand of Lenaugh More the
Red,
That hung beside the gray wolf's
head. —
'T was from his broken phrase de-
scribed,
His foster father was his guide,
Who in his charge from Ulster
bore
Letters and gifts a goodly store ;
But ruffians met them in the
wood,
Ferraight in battle boldly stood,
Till wounded and o'erpowered at
length,
And stripped of all, his failing
strength 250

Just bore him here — and then the
child
Renewed again his moaning wild.

XI

The tear down childhood's cheek
that flows
Is like the dewdrop on the rose ;
When next the summer breeze
comes by
And waves the bush, the flower is
dry.
Won by their care, the orphan
child
Soon on his new protector smiled,
With dimpled cheek and eye so
fair,
Through his thick curls of flaxen
hair, 260
But blithest laughed that cheek
and eye,
When Rokeby's little maid was
nigh ;
'T was his with elder brother's
pride
Matilda's tottering steps to guide ;
His native lays in Irish tongue
To soothe her infant ear he sung,
And primrose twined with daisy
fair
To form a chaplet for her hair.
By lawn, by grove, by brooklet's
strand,
The children still were hand in
hand, 270
And good Sir Richard smiling eyed
The early knot so kindly tied.

XII

But summer months bring wilding
shoot
From bud to bloom, from bloom
to fruit ;
And years draw on our human
span
From child to boy, from boy to
man ;
And soon in Rokeby's woods is
seen
A gallant boy in hunter's green.
He loves to wake the felon boar

In his dark haunt on Greta's
 shore, ²⁸⁰
 And loves against the deer so dun
 To draw the shaft, or lift the gun :
 Yet more he loves in autumn prime
 The hazel's spreading boughs to
 climb,
 And down its clustered store to
 hail
 Where young Matilda holds her
 veil.
 And she whose veil receives the
 shower
 Is altered too and knows her
 power,
 Assumes a monitress's pride
 Her Redmond's dangerous sports
 to chide, ²⁹⁰
 Yet listens still to hear him tell
 How the grim wild-boar fought
 and fell,
 How at his fall the bugle rung,
 Till rock and greenwood answer
 flung ;
 Then blesses her that man can find
 A pastime of such savage kind !

XIII

But Redmond knew to weave his
 tale
 So well with praise of wood and
 dale,
 And knew so well each point to
 trace ²⁹⁹
 Gives living interest to the chase,
 And knew so well o'er all to throw
 His spirit's wild romantic glow,
 That, while she blamed and while
 she feared,
 She loved each venturous tale she
 heard.
 Oft, too, when drifted snow and
 rain
 To bower and hall their steps re-
 strain,
 Together they explored the page
 Of glowing bard or gifted sage ;
 Oft, placed the evening fire beside,
 The minstrel art alternate tried,
 While gladsome harp and lively
 lay ³¹¹

Bade winter-night flit fast away :
 Thus, from their childhood blend-
 ing still
 Their sport, their study, and their
 skill,
 An union of the soul they prove,
 But must not think that it was
 love.
 But though they dared not, envious
 Fame
 Soon dared to give that union
 name ;
 And when so often side by side
 From year to year the pair she
 eyed, ³²⁰
 She sometimes blamed the good
 old knight
 As dull of ear and dim of sight,
 Sometimes his purpose would de-
 clare
 That young O'Neale should wed
 his heir.

XIV

The suit of Wilfrid rent disguise
 And bandage from the lovers'
 eyes ;
 'T was plain that Oswald for his
 son
 Had Rokeby's favor wellnigh won.
 Now must they meet with change
 of cheer,
 With mutual looks of shame and
 fear ; ³³⁰
 Now must Matilda stray apart
 To school her disobedient heart,
 And Redmond now alone must rue
 The love he never can subdue.
 But factions rose, and Rokeby
 sware
 No rebel's son should wed his
 heir ;
 And Redmond, nurtured while a
 child
 In many a bard's traditions wild,
 Now sought the lonely wood or
 stream,
 To cherish there a happier
 dream ³⁴⁰
 Of maiden won by sword or lance,
 As in the regions of romance ;

And count the heroes of his line,
Great Nial of the Pledges Nine,
Shane-Dymas wild, and Geraldine,
And Connan-more, who vowed his
race

Forever to the fight and chase,
And cursed him of his lineage born
Should sheathe the sword to reap
the corn,

Or leave the mountain and the
wold 350

To shroud himself in castled hold.
From such examples hope he
drew,

And brightened as the trumpet
blew.

XV

If brides were won by heart and
blade,

Redmond had both his cause to aid,
And all beside of nurture rare
That might beseem a baron's heir.
Turlough O'Neale in Erin's strife
On Rokeby's Lord bestowed his
life,

And well did Rokeby's generous
knight 360

Young Redmond for the deed re-
quite.

Nor was his liberal care and cost
Upon the gallant stripling lost:
Seek the North Riding broad and
wide,

Like Redmond none could steed
bestride;

From Tynemouth search to Cum-
berland,

Like Redmond none could wield a
brand;

And then, of humor kind and free,
And bearing him to each degree
With frank and fearless courtesy,
There never youth was formed to
steal 371

Upon the heart like brave O'Neale.

XVI

Sir Richard loved him as his son;
And when the days of peace were
done,

And to the gales of war he gave
The banner of his sires to wave,
Redmond, distinguished by his
care,

He chose that honored flag to
bear,

And named his page, the next de-
gree

In that old time to chivalry. 380

In five pitched fields he well main-
tained

The honored place his worth ob-
tained,

And high was Redmond's youth-
ful name

Blazed in the roll of martial fame.

Had fortune smiled on Marston
fight,

The eve had seen him dubbed a
knight;

Twice mid the battle's doubtful
strife

Of Rokeby's Lord he saved the
life,

But when he saw him prisoner
made,

He kissed and then resigned his
blade, 390

And yielded him an easy prey

To those who led the knight away,
Resolved Matilda's sire should
prove

In prison, as in fight, his love.

XVII

When lovers meet in adverse hour,
'T is like a sun-glimpse through a
shower,

A watery ray an instant seen
The darkly closing clouds between.

As Redmond on the turf reclined,
The past and present filled his
mind: 400

'It was not thus,' Affection said,
'I dreamed of my return, dear
maid!

Not thus when from thy trembling
hand

I took the banner and the brand,
When round me, as the bugles
blew,

Their blades three hundred warriors drew,
And, while the standard I unrolled,
Clashed their bright arms, with clamor bold.

Where is that banner now? — its pride

Lies whelmed in Ouse's sullen tide!

Where now these warriors? — in their gore

They cumber Marston's dismal moor!

And what avails a useless brand,
Held by a captive's shackled hand,
That only would his life retain
To aid thy sire to bear his chain!'
Thus Redmond to himself apart,
Nor lighter was his rival's heart;
For Wilfrid, while his generous soul

Disdained to profit by control, 420
By many a sign could mark too plain,

Save with such aid, his hopes were vain.

But now Matilda's accents stole
On the dark visions of their soul,
And bade their mournful musing fly,

Like mist before the zephyr's sigh.

XVIII

'I need not to my friends recall,
How Mortham shunned my father's hall,

A man of silence and of woe,
Yet ever anxious to bestow 430
On my poor self whate'er could prove

A kinsman's confidence and love.
My feeble aid could sometimes chase

The clouds of sorrow for a space;
But oftener, fixed beyond my power,

I marked his deep despondence lower.

One dismal cause, by all un-guessed,

His fearful confidence confessed;
And twice it was my hap to see
Examples of that agony 440

Which for a season can o'erstrain
And wreck the structure of the brain.

He had the awful power to know
The approaching mental overthrow,

And while his mind had courage yet

To struggle with the dreadful fit,
The victim writhed against its throes,

Like wretch beneath a murderer's blows.

This malady, I well could mark,
Sprung from some direful cause
and dark, 450

But still he kept its source concealed,

Till arming for the civil field;
Then in my charge he bade me hold

A treasure huge of gems and gold,
With this disjointed dismal scroll
That tells the secret of his soul
In such wild words as oft betray
A mind by anguish forced astray.'

XIX

MORTHAM'S HISTORY

'Matilda! thou hast seen me start,

As if a dagger thrilled my heart,
When it has happed some casual phrase 461

Waked memory of my former days.
Believe that few can backward cast

Their thought with pleasure on the past;

But I! — my youth was rash and vain,

And blood and rage my manhood stain,

And my gray hairs must now descend

To my cold grave without a friend!

Even thou, Matilda, wilt disown
Thy kinsman when his guilt is
known. 470

And must I lift the bloody veil
That hides my dark and fatal tale?
I must — I will — Pale phantom,
cease!

Leave me one little hour in peace!
Thus haunted, think'st thou I have
skill

Thine own commission to fulfil?
Or, while thou point'st with gesture
fierce

Thy blighted cheek, thy bloody
hearse,

How can I paint thee as thou
wert,

So fair in face, so warm in heart! —

XX

'Yes, she was fair! — Matilda,
thou 481

Hast a soft sadness on thy brow;
But hers was like the sunny glow,
That laughs on earth and all below!

We wedded secret — there was
need —

Differing in country and in creed;
And when to Mortham's tower she
came,

We mentioned not her race and
name,

Until thy sire, who fought afar,
Should turn him home from foreign
war 490

On whose kind influence we relied
To soothe her father's ire and
pride.

Few months we lived retired, unknown

To all but one dear friend alone,
One darling friend — I spare his
shame,

I will not write the villain's name!

My trespasses I might forget,
And sue in vengeance for the debt
Due by a brother worm to me,

Ungrateful to God's clemency, 500
That spared me penitential time,
Nor cut me off amid my crime. —

XXI

'A kindly smile to all she lent,
But on her husband's friend 't was
bent

So kind that from its harmless glee
The wretch misconstrued villany.
Repulsed in his presumptuous
love,

A vengeful snare the traitor wove.
Alone we sat — the flask had
flowed,

My blood with heat unwonted
glowed, 510

When through the alleys we
spied

With hurried step my Edith glide,
Cowering beneath the verdant
screen,

As one unwilling to be seen.
Words cannot paint the fiendish
smile

That curled the traitor's cheek the
while!

Fiercely I questioned of the cause;
He made a cold and artful pause,
Then prayed it might not chafe
my mood —

"There was a gallant in the
wood!" 520

We had been shooting at the
deer;

My cross-bow — evil chance! —
was near:

That ready weapon of my wrath
I caught and, hasting up the path,
In the yew grove my wife I found;
A stranger's arms her neck had
bound!

I marked his heart — the bow I
drew —

I loosed the shaft — 't was more
than true!

I found my Edith's dying charms
Locked in her murdered brother's
arms! 530

He came in secret to inquire
Her state and reconcile her sire.

XXII

'All fled my rage — the villain
first

Whose craft my jealousy had
nursed ;

He sought in far and foreign clime
To 'scape the vengeance of his
crime.

The manner of the slaughter done
Was known to few, my guilt to
none ;

Some tale my faithful steward
framed —

I know not what — of shaft mis-
aimed ; 54°

And even from those the act who
knew

He hid the hand from which it
flew.

Untouched by human laws I stood,
But GOD had heard the cry of
blood !

There is a blank upon my mind,
A fearful vision ill-defined
Of raving till my flesh was torn,
Of dungeon-bolts and fetters
worn —

And when I waked to woe more
mild

And questioned of my infant
child — 55°

Have I not written that she
bare

A boy, like summer morning
fair ? —

With looks confused my menials
tell

That armed men in Mortham
dell

Beset the nurse's evening way,
And bore her with her charge
away.

My faithless friend, and none but
he,

Could profit by this villany ;
Him then I sought with purpose
dread

Of treble vengeance on his head !
He 'scaped me — but my bosom's
wound 56°

Some faint relief from wandering
found,

And over distant land and sea
I bore my load of misery.

XXIII

'T was then that fate my foot-
steps led

Among a daring crew and dread,
With whom full oft my hated life
I ventured in such desperate strife
That even my fierce associates
saw

My frantic deeds with doubt and
awe. 57°

Much then I learned and much
can show

Of human guilt and human woe,
Yet ne'er have in my wanderings
known

A wretch whose sorrows matched
my own ! —

It chanced that after battle fray
Upon the bloody field we lay ;
The yellow moon her lustre shed
Upon the wounded and the dead,
While, sense in toil and wassail
drowned,

My ruffian comrades slept around,
There came a voice — its silver
tone 58°

Was soft, Matilda, as thine own —
" Ah, wretch ! " it said, " what
mak'st thou here,

While unavenged my bloody bier,
While unprotected lives mine heir
Without a father's name and
care ? "

XXIV

' I heard — obeyed — and home-
ward drew ;

The fiercest of our desperate crew
I brought, at time of need to aid
My purposed vengeance long de-
layed. 59°

But humble be my thanks to Hea-
ven

That better hopes and thoughts
has given,

And by our Lord's dear prayer has
taught

Mercy by mercy must be bought ! —
Let me in misery rejoice —

I 've seen his face — I 've heard
his voice —

I claimed of him my only child —
As he disowned the theft, he
smiled!

That very calm and callous look,
That fiendish sneer his visage
took, 600

As when he said, in scornful
mood,

"There is a gallant in the
wood!" —

I did not slay him as he stood —
All praise be to my Maker given!
Long sufferance is one path to
heaven.'

XXV

Thus far the woful tale was heard
When something in the thicket
stirred.

Up Redmond sprung; the villain
Guy —

For he it was that lurked so nigh —
Drew back — he durst not cross
his steel 610

A moment's space with brave
O'Neale

For all the treasured gold that
rests

In Mortham's iron-banded chests.
Redmond resumed his seat; — he
said

Some roe was rustling in the
shade.

Bertram laughed grimly when he
saw

His timorous comrade backward
draw;

'A trusty mate art thou, to fear
A single arm, and aid so near! 619
Yet have I seen thee mark a deer.
Give me thy carabine — I'll show
An art that thou wilt gladly know,
How thou mayst safely quell a
foe.'

XXVI

On hands and knees fierce Ber-
tram drew

The spreading birch and hazels
through,

Till he had Redmond full in view;

The gun he levelled — Mark like
this

Was Bertram never known to
miss,

When fair opposed to aim there
safe

An object of his mortal hate. 630
That day young Redmond's death
had seen,

But twice Matilda came between
The carabine and Redmond's
breast

Just ere the spring his finger
pressed.

A deadly oath the ruffian swore,
But yet his fell design forbore:

'It ne'er,' he muttered, 'shall be
said

That thus I scathed thee, haughty
maid!'

Then moved to seek more open
aim,

When to his side Guy Denzil
came: 640

'Bertram, forbear! — we are un-
done

Forever, if thou fire the gun.
By all the fiends, an armed force
Descends the dell of foot and
horse!

We perish if they hear a shot —
Madman! we have a safer plot —
Nay, friend, be ruled, and bear
thee back!

Behold, down yonder hollow track
The warlike leader of the band
Comes with his broadsword in his
hand.' 650

Bertram looked up; he saw, he
knew

That Denzil's fears had counselled
true,

Then cursed his fortune and with-
drew,

Threaded the woodlands unde-
scribed,

And gained the cave on Greta
side.

XXVII

They whom dark Bertram in his
wrath

Doomed to captivity or death,
 Their thoughts to one sad subject
 lent,
 Saw not nor heard the ambush-
 ment.
 Heedless and unconcerned they
 sate 660
 While on the very verge of fate,
 Heedless and unconcerned re-
 mained
 When Heaven the murderer's arm
 restrained;
 As ships drift darkling down the
 tide,
 Nor see the shelves o'er which
 they glide.
 Uninterrupted thus they heard
 What Mortham's closing tale de-
 clared.
 He spoke of wealth as of a
 load
 By fortune on a wretch bestowed,
 In bitter mockery of hate, 670
 His cureless woes to aggravate;
 But yet he prayed Matilda's
 care
 Might save that treasure for his
 heir—
 His Edith's son—for still he
 raved
 As confident his life was saved;
 In frequent vision, he averred,
 He saw his face, his voice he
 heard,
 Then argued calm—had murder
 been,
 The blood, the corpses, had been
 seen; 679
 Some had pretended, too, to mark
 On Windermere a stranger bark,
 Whose crew, with jealous care yet
 mild,
 Guarded a female and a child.
 While these faint proofs he told
 and pressed,
 Hope seemed to kindle in his
 breast;
 Though inconsistent, vague, and
 vain,
 It warped his judgment and his
 brain.

XXVIII

These solemn words his story
 close:—
 'Heaven witness for me that I
 chose
 My part in this sad civil fight 690
 Moved by no cause but England's
 right.
 My country's groans have bid me
 draw
 My sword for gospel and for
 law;—
 These righted, I fling arms aside
 And seek my son through Europe
 wide.
 My wealth, on which a kinsman
 nigh
 Already casts a grasping eye,
 With thee may unsuspected lie.
 When of my death Matilda hears,
 Let her retain her trust 700
 years;
 If none from me the treasure
 claim,
 Perished is Mortham's race and
 name.
 Then let it leave her generous
 hand,
 And flow in bounty o'er the land,
 Soften the wounded prisoner's lot,
 Rebuild the peasant's ruined cot;
 So spoils, acquired by fight afar,
 Shall mitigate domestic war.'

XXIX

The generous youths, who well
 had known
 Of Mortham's mind the powerful
 tone, 710
 To that high mind by sorrow
 swerved
 Gave sympathy his woes de-
 served:
 But Wilfrid chief, who saw re-
 vealed
 Why Mortham wished his life con-
 cealed,
 In secret, doubtless, to pursue
 The schemes his wildered fancy
 drew.
 Thoughtful he heard Matilda tell

That she would share her father's
 cell,
 His partner of captivity,
 Where'er his prison-house should
 be; 720
 Yet grieved to think that Rokeby-
 hall,
 Dismantled and forsook by all,
 Open to rapine and to stealth,
 Had now no safeguard for the
 wealth
 Intrusted by her kinsman kind
 And for such noble use designed.
 'Was Barnard Castle then her
 choice.'
 Wilfrid inquired with hasty voice,
 'Since there the victor's laws or-
 dain 729
 Her father must a space remain?'
 A fluttered hope his accent shook,
 A fluttered joy was in his look.
 Matilda hastened to reply,
 For anger flashed in Redmond's
 eye;—
 'Duty,' she said, with gentle grace,
 'Kind Wilfrid, has no choice of
 place;
 Else had I for my sire assigned
 Prison less galling to his mind
 Than that his wild-wood haunts
 which sees
 And hears the murmur of the
 Tees, 740
 Recalling thus with every glance
 What captive's sorrow can en-
 hance;
 But where those woes are highest,
 there
 Needs Rokeby most his daughter's
 care.'

XXX

He felt the kindly check she gave,
 And stood abashed — then an-
 swered grave:
 'I sought thy purpose, noble maid,
 Thy doubts to clear, thy schemes
 to aid.
 I have beneath mine own com-
 mand,
 So wills my sire, a gallant band,

And well could send some horse-
 men wight 751
 To bear the treasure forth by
 night,
 And so bestow it as you deem
 In these ill days may safest seem.'
 'Thanks, gentle Wilfrid, thanks,'
 she said:
 'O, be it not one day delayed!
 And, more thy sister-friend to aid,
 Be thou thyself content to hold
 In thine own keeping Mortham's
 gold,
 Safest with thee.' — While thus
 she spoke, 760
 Armed soldiers on their converse
 broke,
 The same of whose approach
 afraid
 The ruffians left their ambuscade.
 Their chief to Wilfrid bended low,
 Then looked around as for a foe.
 'What mean'st thou, friend,' young
 Wycliffe said,
 'Why thus in arms beset the
 glade?'—
 'That would I gladly learn from
 you;
 For up my squadron as I drew
 To exercise our martial game 770
 Upon the moor of Barningham,
 A stranger told you were waylaid,
 Surrounded, and to death be-
 trayed.
 He had a leader's voice, I ween,
 A falcon's glance, a warrior's
 mien.
 He bade me bring you instant aid;
 I doubted not and I obeyed.'

XXXI

Wilfrid changed color, and amazed
 Turned short and on the speaker
 gazed,
 While Redmond every thicket
 round 780
 Tracked earnest as a questing
 hound,
 And Denzil's carabine he found;
 Sure evidence by which they knew
 The warning was as kind as true.

Wisest it seemed with cautious
speed

To leave the dell. It was agreed
That Redmond with Matilda fair
And fitting guard should home re-
pair;

At nightfall Wilfrid should attend
With a strong band his sister-
friend,

To bear with her from Rokeby's
bowers

To Barnard Castle's lofty towers
Secret and safe the banded chests
In which the wealth of Mortham
rests.

This hasty purpose fixed, they
part,

Each with a grieved and anxious
heart.

CANTO FIFTH

I

THE sultry summer day is done,
The western hills have hid the
sun,

But mountain peak and village
spire

Retain reflection of his fire.

Old Barnard's towers are purple
still

To those that gaze from Toller-
hill;

Distant and high, the tower of
Bowes

Like steel upon the anvil glows;
And Stanmore's ridge behind that
lay

Rich with the spoils of parting
day,

In crimson and in gold arrayed,
Streaks yet awhile the closing
shade,

Then slow resigns to darkening
heaven

The tints which brighter hours
had given.

Thus aged men full loath and
slow

The vanities of life forego,

And count their youthful follies
o'er

Till memory lends her light no
more.

II

The eve that slow on upland fades
Has darker closed on Rokeby's
glades

Where, sunk within their banks
profound,

Her guardian streams to meeting
wound.

The stately oaks, whose sombre
frown

Of noontide made a twilight brown,
Impervious now to fainter light,

Of twilight make an early night.

Hoarse into middle air arose

The vespers of the roosting crows,
And with congenial murmurs seem

To wake the Genii of the stream;

For louder clamored Greta's tide,

And Tees in deeper voice replied,

And fitful waked the evening wind,

Fitful in sighs its breath resigned.

Wilfrid, whose fancy-nurtured soul

Felt in the scene a soft control,

With lighter footstep pressed the
ground,

And often paused to look around;

And, though his path was to his
love,

Could not but linger in the grove,

To drink the thrilling interest
dear

Of awful pleasure checked by fear,
Such inconsistent moods have we,

Even when our passions strike the
key.

III

Now, through the wood's dark
mazes past,

The opening lawn he reached at
last

Where, silvered by the moonlight
ray,

The ancient Hall before him lay.

Those martial terrors long were
fled

That frowned of old around its
head: 50

The battlements, the turrets gray,
Seemed half abandoned to decay;
On barbican and keep of stone
Stern Time the foeman's work had
done.

Where banners the invader braved,
The harebell now and wallflower
waved;

In the rude guard-room where of
yore

Their weary hours the warders
wore,

Now, while the cheerful fagots
blaze,

On the paved floor the spindle
plays; 60

The flanking guns dismounted lie,
The moat is ruinous and dry,

The grim portcullis gone — and all
The fortress turned to peaceful
Hall.

IV

But yet precautions lately ta'en
Showed danger's day revived
again;

The court-yard wall showed marks
of care

The fall'n defences to repair,
Lending such strength as might
withstand

The insult of marauding band. 70

The beams once more were taught
to bear

The trembling drawbridge into air,
And not till questioned o'er and
o'er

For Wilfrid oped the jealous door,
And when he entered bolt and bar
Resumed their place with sullen
jar;

Then, as he crossed the vaulted
porch,

The old gray porter raised his
torch,

And viewed him o'er from foot to
head

Ere to the hall his steps he led. 80
That huge old hall of knightly
state

Dismantled seemed and desolate.
The moon through transom-shafts
of stone

Which crossed the latticed oriels
shone,

And by the mournful light she gave
The Gothic vault seemed funeral
cave.

Pennon and banner waved no
more

O'er beams of stag and tusks of
boar,

Nor glimmering arms were mar-
shalled seen

To glance those sylvan spoils be-
tween. 90

Those arms, those ensigns, borne
away,

Accomplished Rokeby's brave
array,

But all were lost on Marston's day!
Yet here and there the moonbeams
fall

Where armor yet adorns the wall,
Cumbrous of size, uncouth to sight,
And useless in the modern fight,
Like veteran relic of the wars
Known only by neglected scars.

V

Matilda soon to greet him came,
And bade them light the evening
flame; 101

Said all for parting was prepared,
And tarried but for Wilfrid's
guard.

But then, reluctant to unfold
His father's avarice of gold,
He hinted that lest jealous eye
Should on their precious burden
pry,

He judged it best the castle gate
To enter when the night wore late;
And therefore he had left com-
mand 110

With those he trusted of his band
That they should be at Rokeby met
What time the midnight-watch was
set.

Now Redmond came, whose anx-
ious care

Till then was busied to prepare
All needful, meetly to arrange
The mansion for its mournful
change.

With Wilfrid's care and kindness
pleased, 118

His cold unready hand he seized,
And pressed it till his kindly strain
The gentle youth returned again.

Seemed as between them this was
said,

'Awhile let jealousy be dead,
And let our contest be whose
care
Shall best assist this helpless fair.'

VI

There was no speech the truce to
bind;

It was a compact of the mind,
A generous thought at once im-
pressed

On either rival's generous breast.

Matilda well the secret took 130
From sudden change of mien and
look,

And—for not small had been her
fear

Of jealous ire and danger near—
Felt even in her dejected state

A joy beyond the reach of fate.
They closed beside the chimney's
blaze,

And talked, and hoped for happier
days,

And lent their spirits' rising glow
Awhile to gild impending woe—
High privilege of youthful time,
Worth all the pleasures of our
prime! 141

The bickering fagot sparkled
bright

And gave the scene of love to
sight,

Bade Wilfrid's cheek more lively
glow,

Played on Matilda's neck of snow,
Her nut-brown curls and forehead
high,

And laughed in Redmond's azure
eye.

Two lovers by the maiden sate 148
Without a glance of jealous hate;
The maid her lovers sat between
With open brow and equal mien;
It is a sight but rarely spied,
Thanks to man's wrath and wo-
man's pride.

VII

While thus in peaceful guise they
sate

A knock alarmed the outer gate,
And ere the tardy porter stirred
The tinkling of a harp was heard.
A manly voice of mellow swell
Bore burden to the music well:—

SONG

'Summer eve is gone and past,
Summer dew is falling fast; 161
I have wandered all the day,
Do not bid me farther stray!
Gentle hearts of gentle kin,
Take the wandering harper in!'

But the stern porter answer gave,
With 'Get thee hence, thou stroll-
ing knave!

The king wants soldiers; war, I
trow,

Were meetter trade for such as
thou.'

At this unkind reproof again 170
Answered the ready Minstrel's
strain:

SONG RESUMED

'Bid not me, in battle-field,
Buckler lift or broadsword wield!
All my strength and all my art
Is to touch the gentle heart
With the wizard notes that ring
From the peaceful minstrel-
string.'

The porter, all unmoved, replied,—
'Depart in peace, with Heaven to
guide;

If longer by the gate thou dwell,
Trust me, thou shalt not part so
well.' 181

VIII

With somewhat of appealing look
The harper's part young Wilfrid
took :

'These notes so wild and ready
thrill,

They show no vulgar minstrel's
skill;

Hard were his task to seek a home
More distant, since the night is
come ;

And for his faith I dare engage —
Your Harpool's blood is soured by
age ;

His gate, once readily displayed
To greet the friend, the poor to
aid, 191

Now even to me though known of
old

Did but reluctantly unfold.' —

'O blame not as poor Harpool's
crime

An evil of this evil time.

He deems dependent on his care
The safety of his patron's heir,
Nor judges meet to ope the tower
To guest unknown at parting hour,
Urging his duty to excess 200
Of rough and stubborn faithful-
ness.

For this poor harper, I would fain
He may relax: — hark to his
strain !'

IX

SONG RESUMED

'I have song of war for knight,
Lay of love for lady bright,
Fairy tale to lull the heir,
Goblin grim the maids to scare.
Dark the night and long till day,
Do not bid me farther stray !

'Rokeby's lords of martial fame,
I can count them name by name ;
Legends of their line there be, 212
Known to few but known to me ;
If you honor Rokeby's kin,
Take the wandering harper in !

'Rokeby's lords had fair regard
For the harp and for the bard ;
Baron's race throve never well
Where the curse of minstrel fell.
If you love that noble kin, 220
Take the weary harper in !'

'Hark ! Harpool parleys — there
is hope,'

Said Redmond, 'that the gate will
ope.' —

'For all thy brag and boast, I
throw,

Naught knowest thou of the Felon
Sow,'

Quoth Harpool, 'nor how Greta-
side

She roamed and Rokeby forest
wide ;

Nor how Ralph Rokeby gave the
beast

To Richmond's friars to make a
feast.

Of Gilbert Griffinson the tale 230
Goes, and of gallant Peter Dale

That well could strike with sword
amain,

And of the valiant son of Spain,
Friar Middleton, and blithe Sir
Ralph ;

There were a jest to make us
laugh !

If thou canst tell it, in yon shed,
Thou 'st won thy supper and thy
bed.'

X

Matilda smiled ; 'Cold hope,' said
she,

'From Harpool's love of min-
strelsy ! 239

But for this harper may we dare,
Redmond, to mend his couch and
fare ?' —

'O, ask me not ! — At minstrel-
string

My heart from infancy would
spring ;

Nor can I hear its simplest strain
But it brings Erin's dream again,

When placed by Owen Lysagh's
knee —

The Filea of O'Neale was he,
A blind and bearded man whose
eld

Was sacred as a prophet's held —
I've seen a ring of rugged kerne,
With aspects shaggy, wild, and
stern, ²⁵¹

Enchanted by the master's lay,
Linger around the livelong day,
Shift from wild rage to wilder glee,
To love, to grief, to ecstasy,
And feel each varied change of
soul

Obedient to the bard's control. —
Ah, Clandeboy! thy friendly floor
Slieve-Donard's oak shall light no
more; ²⁵⁹

Nor Owen's harp beside the blaze
Tell maiden's love or hero's praise!
The mantling brambles hide thy
hearth,

Centre of hospitable mirth;
All undistinguished in the glade,
My sires' glad home is prostrate
laid,

Their vassals wander wide and
far,

Serve foreign lords in distant war,
And now the stranger's sons enjoy
The lovely woods of Clandeboy!
He spoke, and proudly turned
aside ²⁷⁰

The starting tear to dry and hide.

XI

Matilda's dark and softened eye
Was glistening ere O'Neale's was
dry.

Her hand upon his arm she laid, —
'It is the will of Heaven,' she
said.

'And think'st thou, Redmond, I
can part

From this loved home with light-
some heart,

Leaving to wild neglect whate'er
Even from my infancy was dear?
For in this calm domestic bound

Were all Matilda's pleasures
found. ²⁸¹

That hearth my sire was wont to
grace

Full soon may be a stranger's
place;

This hall in which a child I played
Like thine, dear Redmond, lowly
laid,

The bramble and the thorn may
braid;

Or, passed for aye from me and
mine,

It ne'er may shelter Rokeby's line.
Yet is this consolation given,

My Redmond, — 't is the will of
Heaven.' ²⁹⁰

Her word, her action, and her
phrase

Were kindly as in early days;
For cold reserve had lost its power
In sorrow's sympathetic hour.

Young Redmond dared not trust
his voice;

But rather had it been his choice
To share that melancholy hour
Than, armed with all a chieftain's
power,

In full possession to enjoy
Slieve-Donard wide and Clande-
boy. ³⁰⁰

XII

The blood left Wilfrid's ashen
cheek,

Matilda sees and hastes to
speak. —

'Happy in friendship's ready aid,
Let all my murmurs here be staid!
And Rokeby's maiden will not
part

From Rokeby's hall with moody
heart.

This night at least for Rokeby's
fame

The hospitable hearth shall flame,
And ere its native heir retire

Find for the wanderer rest and fire,
While this poor harper by the
blaze ³¹¹

Recounts the tale of other days.
 Bid Harpool ope the door with
 speed,
 Admit him and relieve each
 need. —
 Meantime, kind Wycliffe, wilt
 thou try
 Thy minstrel skill? — Nay, no
 reply —
 And look not sad! — I guess thy
 thought;
 Thy verse with laurels would be
 bought,
 And poor Matilda, landless now,
 Has not a garland for thy brow.
 True, I must leave sweet Rokeby's
 glades, 321
 Nor wander more in Greta shades;
 But sure, no rigid jailer, thou
 Wilt a short prison-walk allow
 Where summer flowers grow wild
 at will
 On Marwood - chase and Toller
 Hill;
 Then holly green and lily gay
 Shall twine in guerdon of thy lay.
 The mournful youth a space aside
 To tune Matilda's harp applied,
 And then a low sad descant rung
 As prelude to the lay he sung. 332

XIII

THE CYPRESS WREATH

'O, lady, twine no wreath for me,
 Or twine it of the cypress-tree!
 Too lively glow the lilies light,
 The varnished holly's all too
 bright,
 The May-flower and the eglantine
 May shade a brow less sad than
 mine;
 But, lady, weave no wreath for
 me, 339
 Or weave it of the cypress-tree!

'Let dimpled Mirth his temples
 twine
 With tendrils of the laughing vine;
 The manly oak, the pensive yew,
 To patriot and to sage be due;

The myrtle bough bids lovers live,
 But that Matilda will not give;
 Then, lady, twine no wreath for me,
 Or twine it of the cypress-tree!

'Let merry England proudly rear
 Her blended roses bought so dear;
 Let Albin bind her bonnet blue 351
 With heath and harebell dipped in
 dew;
 On favored Erin's crest be seen
 The flower she loves of emerald
 green —
 But, lady, twine no wreath for me,
 Or twine it of the cypress-tree.

'Strike the wild harp while maids
 prepare
 The ivy meet for minstrel's hair;
 And, while his crown of laurel-
 leaves
 With bloody hand the victor
 weaves, 360
 Let the loud trump his triumph
 tell;
 But when you hear the passing-
 bell,
 Then, lady, twine a wreath for me,
 And twine it of the cypress-tree.

'Yes! twine for me the cypress-
 bough;
 But, O Matilda, twine not now!
 Stay till a few brief months are
 past,
 And I have looked and loved my
 last!
 When villagers my shroud bestrew
 With pansies, rosemary, and
 rue, — 370
 Then, lady, weave a wreath for me,
 And weave it of the cypress-tree.'

XIV

O'Neale observed the starting
 tear,
 And spoke with kind and blithe-
 some cheer —
 'No, noble Wilfrid! ere the day
 When mourns the land thy silent
 lay,

Shall many a wreath be freely
wove

By hand of friendship and of love.
I would not wish that rigid Fate
Had doomed thee to a captive's
state, 380

Whose hands are bound by honor's
law,

Who wears a sword he must not
draw;

But were it so, in minstrel pride
The land together would we ride
On prancing steeds, like harpers
old,

Bound for the halls of barons bold;
Each lover of the lyre we'd seek
From Michael's Mount to Skid-
daw's Peak,

Survey wild Albin's mountain
strand, 389

And roam green Erin's lovely land,
While thou the gentler souls should
move

With lay of pity and of love,
And I, thy mate, in rougher strain
Would sing of war and warriors
slain.

Old England's bards were van-
quished then,

And Scotland's vaunted Haw-
thornden,

And, silenced on Iernian shore,
M'Curtin's harp should charm no
more!

In lively mood he spoke to wile
From Wilfrid's woe-worn cheek a
smile. 400

XV

'But,' said Matilda, 'ere thy name,
Good Redmond, gain its destined
fame,

Say, wilt thou kindly deign to call
Thy brother-minstrel to the hall?
Bid all the household too attend,
Each in his rank a humble friend;
I know their faithful hearts will
grieve

When their poor mistress takes
her leave;

So let the horn and beaker flow
To mitigate their parting woe.' 410

The harper came;—in youth's
first prime

Himself; in mode of olden time
His garb was fashioned, to express
The ancient English minstrel's
dress,

A seemly gown of Kendal green
With gorget closed of silver sheen;
His harp in silken scarf was slung,
And by his side an anlace hung.
It seemed some masquer's quaint
array

For revel or for holiday. 420

XVI

He made obeisance with a free
Yet studied air of courtesy.

Each look and accent framed to
please

Seemed to affect a playful ease;
His face was of that doubtful kind
That wins the eye, but not the
mind;

Yet harsh it seemed to deem amiss
Of brow so young and smooth as
this.

His was the subtle look and sly
That, spying all, seems naught to
spy; 430

Round all the group his glances
stole,

Unmarked themselves, to mark
the whole.

Yet sunk beneath Matilda's look,
Nor could the eye of Redmond
brook.

To the suspicious or the old
Subtle and dangerous and bold
Had seemed this self-invited guest;
But young our lovers,—and the
rest,

Wrapt in their sorrow and their
fear 439

At parting of their Mistress dear,
Tear-blinded to the castle-hall
Came as to bear her funeral pall.

XVII

All that expression base was gone
When waked the guest his minstrel
tone;

It fled at inspiration's call,
As erst the demon fled from Saul.
More noble glance he cast around,
More free-drawn breath inspired
the sound,

His pulse beat bolder and more
high

In all the pride of minstrelsy! 450
Alas! too soon that pride was o'er,
Sunk with the lay that bade it soar!
His soul resumed with habit's
chain

Its vices wild and follies vain,
And gave the talent with him born,
To be a common curse and scorn.
Such was the youth whom Rokeby's
maid

With condescending kindness
prayed

Here to renew the strains she
loved,

At distance heard and well ap-
proved. 460

XVIII

SONG

THE HARP

I was a wild and wayward boy,
My childhood scorned each child-
ish toy;

Retired from all, reserved and coy.
To musing prone,

I wooed my solitary joy,
My Harp alone.

My youth with bold ambition's
mood

Despised the humble stream and
wood

Where my poor father's cottage
stood,

To fame unknown;— 470
What should my soaring views
make good?

My Harp alone!

Love came with all his frantic fire,
And wild romance of vain desire:
The baron's daughter heard my
lyre

And praised the tone;—
What could presumptuous hope
inspire?

My Harp alone!

At manhood's touch the bubble
burst,

And manhood's pride the vision
curst, 480

And all that had my folly nursed
Love's sway to own;

Yet spared the spell that lulled me
first,

My Harp alone!

Woe came with war, and want
with woe,

And it was mine to undergo
Each outrage of the rebel foe:—

Can aught atone

My fields laid waste, my cot laid
low?

My Harp alone! 490

Ambition's dreams I've seen de-
part,

Have rued of penury the smart,
Have felt of love the venom'd

dart,

When hope was flown;

Yet rests one solace to my heart,—
My Harp alone!

Then over mountain, moor, and
hill,

My faithful Harp, I'll bear thee
still;

And when this life of want and ill
Is wellnigh gone, 500

Thy strings mine elegy shall thrill
My Harp alone!

XIX

'A pleasing lay!' Matilda said;
But Harpool shook his old gray
head,

And took his baton and his torch
To seek his guard-room in the
porch.

Edmund observed — with sudden
change

Among the strings his fingers
 range,
 Until they waked a bolder glee
 Of military melody; 510
 Then paused amid the martial
 sound,
 And looked with well-feigned fear
 around;—
 'None to this noble house belong,'
 He said, 'that would a minstrel
 wrong
 Whose fate has been through good
 and ill
 To love his Royal Master still,
 And with your honored leave
 would fain
 Rejoice you with a loyal strain.'
 Then, as assured by sign and
 look,
 The warlike tone again he took;
 And Harpool stopped and turned
 to hear 521
 A ditty of the Cavalier.

XX

SONG

THE CAVALIER

While the dawn on the mountain
 was misty and gray,
 My true love has mounted his
 steed and away,
 Over hill, over valley, o'er dale, and
 o'er down;
 Heaven shield the brave gallant
 that fights for the Crown!

 He has doffed the silk doublet the
 breastplate to bear,
 He has placed the steel-cap o'er
 his long-flowing hair,
 From his belt to his stirrup his
 broadsword hangs down,—
 Heaven shield the brave gallant
 that fights for the Crown! 530

 For the rights of fair England that
 broadsword he draws,
 Her King is his leader, her Church
 is his cause;

His watchword is honor, his pay is
 renown,—

God strike with the gallant that
 strikes for the Crown!

They may boast of their Fairfax,
 their Waller, and all
 The roundheaded rebels of West-
 minster Hall;
 But tell these bold traitors of Lon-
 don's proud town,
 That the spears of the North have
 encircled the Crown.

There's Derby and Cavendish,
 dread of their foes;
 There's Erin's high Ormond and
 Scotland's Montrose! 540
 Would you match the base Skip-
 pon, and Massey, and Brown,
 With the Barons of England that
 fight for the Crown?

Now joy to the crest of the brave
 Cavalier!

Be his banner unconquered, resist-
 less his spear,

Till in peace and in triumph his
 toils he may drown,

In a pledge to fair England, her
 Church, and her Crown.

XXI

'Alas!' Matilda said, 'that strain,
 Good harper, now is heard in
 vain!

The time has been at such a sound
 When Rokeby's vassals gathered
 round, 550

An hundred manly hearts would
 bound;

But now, the stirring verse we
 hear

Like trump in dying soldier's ear!
 Listless and sad the notes we
 own,

The power to answer them is
 flown.

Yet not without his meet applause
 Be he that sings the rightful cause,
 Even when the crisis of its fate

To human eye seems desperate.
 While Rokeby's heir such power
 retains, 560
 Let this slight guerdon pay thy
 pains:—
 And lend thy harp; I fain would
 try
 If my poor skill can aught supply,
 Ere yet I leave my fathers' hall,
 To mourn the cause in which we
 fall.'

XXII

The harper with a downcast look
 And trembling hand her bounty
 took.
 As yet the conscious pride of art
 Had steeled him in his treacher-
 ous part;
 A powerful spring of force un-
 guessed 570
 That hath each gentler mood sup-
 pressed,
 And reigned in many a human
 breast,
 From his that plans the red cam-
 paign
 To his that wastes the woodland
 reign.
 The failing wing, the blood-shot
 eye
 The sportsman marks with apathy,
 Each feeling of his victim's ill
 Drowned in his own successful
 skill.
 The veteran, too, who now no
 more 579
 Aspires to head the battle's roar,
 Loves still the triumph of his art,
 And traces on the pencilled chart
 Some stern invader's destined
 way
 Through blood and ruin to his
 prey;
 Patriots to death, and towns to
 flame
 He dooms, to raise another's name
 And shares the guilt, though not
 the fame.
 What pays him for his span of
 time

Spent in premeditating crime?
 What against pity arms his heart?
 It is the conscious pride of art. 591

XXIII

But principles in Edmund's mind
 Were baseless, vague, and unde-
 fined.
 His soul, like bark with rudder
 lost,
 On passion's changeful tide was
 tost;
 Nor vice nor virtue had the power
 Beyond the impression of the
 hour;
 And O, when passion rules, how
 rare
 The hours that fall to Virtue's
 share!
 Yet now she roused her—for the
 pride 600
 That lack of sterner guilt supplied
 Could scarce support him when
 arose
 The lay that mourned Matilda's
 woes.

SONG

THE FAREWELL

'The sound of Rokeby's woods I
 hear,
 They mingle with the song:
 Dark Greta's voice is in mine
 ear,
 I must not hear them long.
 From every loved and native
 haunt
 The native heir must stray,
 And, like a ghost whom sunbeams
 daunt, 610
 Must part before the day.
 'Soon from the halls my fathers
 reared,
 Their scutcheons may descend,
 A line so long beloved and feared
 May soon obscurely end.
 No longer here Matilda's tone
 Shall bid these echoes swell;

Yet shall they hear her proudly
own

The cause in which we fell.'

The lady paused, and then
again

Resumed the lay in loftier
strain.— 620

XXIV

'Let our halls and towers' decay,
Be our name and line forgot,
Lands and manors pass away,—

We but share our monarch's
lot.

If no more our annals show
Battles won and banners taken,
Still in death, defeat, and woe,
Ours be loyalty unshaken!

'Constant still in danger's hour,
Princes owned our father's
aid; 631

Lands and honors, wealth and
power,

Well their loyalty repaid.
Perish wealth and power and
pride,

Mortal boons by mortals given!
But let constancy abide,
Constancy's the gift of Heaven.'

XXV

While thus Matilda's lay was
heard,

A thousand thoughts in Edmund
stirred.

In peasant life he might have
known 640

As fair a face, as sweet a tone;
But village notes could ne'er sup-
ply

That rich and varied melody,
And ne'er in cottage maid was
seen

The easy dignity of mien,
Claiming respect yet waiving
state,

That marks the daughters of the
great.

Yet not perchance had these alone

His scheme of purposed guilt o'er-
thrown;

But while her energy of mind 650
Superior rose to griefs combined,
Lending its kindling to her eye,
Giving her form new majesty,—
To Edmund's thought Matilda
seemed

The very object he had dreamed
When, long ere guilt his soul had
known,

In Winston bowers he mused
alone,

Taxing his fancy to combine
The face, the air, the voice divine,
Of princess fair by cruel fate 660
Reft of her honors, power, and
state,

Till to her rightful realm restored
By destined hero's conquering
sword.

XXVI

'Such was my vision!' Edmund
thought;

'And have I then the ruin
wrought

Of such a maid that fancy ne'er
In fairest vision formed her peer?
Was it my hand that could un-
close

The postern to her ruthless foes?
Foes lost to honor, law, and faith,
Their kindest mercy sudden
death! 671

Have I done this? I, who have
swore

That if the globe such angel bore,
I would have traced its circle
broad

To kiss the ground on which she
trode!—

And now—O, would that earth
would rive

And close upon me while alive!—
Is there no hope?—is all then
lost?—

Bertram's already on his post!
Even now beside the hall's arched
door 680

I saw his shadow cross the floor!

He was to wait my signal strain —
A little respite thus we gain :
By what I heard the menials say,
Young Wycliffe's troop are on
their way —

Alarm precipitates the crime !
My harp must wear away the
time.' —

And then in accents faint and
low

He faltered forth a tale of woe.

XXVII

BALLAD

" And whither would you lead me
then ? " 690

Quoth the friar of orders gray ;
And the ruffians twain replied
again,

" By a dying woman to pray." —

" I see," he said, " a lovely sight,
A sight bodes little harm,
A lady as a lily bright
With an infant on her arm." —

" Then do thine office, friar gray,
And see thou shrive her free !
Else shall the sprite that parts to-
night 700

Fling all its guilt on thee.

" Let mass be said and trentals
read

When thou 'rt to convent gone,
And bid the bell of Saint Benedict
Toll out its deepest tone."

' The shrift is done, the friar is
gone,

Blindfolded as he came —
Next morning all in Littlecot Hall
Were weeping for their dame.

' Wild Darrell is an altered
man, 710

The village crones can tell ;
He looks pale as clay and strives
to pray,
If he hears the convent bell.

' If prince or peer cross Darrell's
way,

He 'll beard him in his pride —
If he meet a friar of orders gray,
He droops and turns aside.'

XXVIII

' Harper ! methinks thy magic
lays,'

Matilda said, ' can goblins raise !
Wellnigh my fancy can discern
Near the dark porch a visage
stern ; 721

E'en now in yonder shadowy nook
I see it ! — Redmond, Wilfrid,
look ! —

A human form distinct and
clear —

God, for thy mercy ! — It draws
near !'

She saw too true. Stride after
stride,

The centre of that chamber wide
Fierce Bertram gained ; then
made a stand,

And, proudly waving with his
hand,

Thundered — ' Be still, upon your
lives ! — 730

He bleeds who speaks, he dies
who strives.'

Behind their chief the robber
crew,

Forth from the darkened portal
drew

In silence — save that echo dread
Returned their heavy measured
tread.

The lamp's uncertain lustre gave
Their arms to gleam, their plumes
to wave ;

File after file in order pass,
Like forms on Banquo's mystic
glass.

Then, halting at their leader's
sign, 740

At once they formed and curved
their line,

Hemming within its crescent drear
Their victims like a herd of deer.

Another sign, and to the aim

Levelled at once their muskets
came,
As waiting but their chieftain's
word
To make their fatal volley heard.

XXIX

Back in a heap the menials drew ;
Yet, even in mortal terror true,
Their pale and startled group op-
pose 750
Between Matilda and the foes.
'O, haste thee, Wilfrid !' Redmond
cried ;
'Undo that wicket by thy side !
Bear hence Matilda—gain the
wood
The pass may be awhile made
good—
Thy band ere this must sure be
nigh—
O speak not—dally not—but fly !'
While yet the crowd their motions
hide,
Through the low wicket door they
glide.
Through vaulted passages they
wind, 760
In Gothic intricacy twined :
Wilfrid half led and half he bore
Matilda to the postern door,
And safe beneath the forest tree,
The lady stands at liberty.
The moonbeams, the fresh gale's
caress,
Renewed suspended conscious-
ness ;—
'Where 's Redmond ?' eagerly she
cries :
'Thou answer'st not—he dies ! he
dies !
And thou hast left him all bereft
Of mortal aid—with murderers
left ! 771
I know it well—he would not
yield
His sword to man—his doom is
sealed !
For my scorned life, which thou
hast bought
At price of his, I thank thee not.'

XXX

The unjust reproach, the angry
look,
The heart of Wilfrid could not
brook,
'Lady,' he said, 'my band so near,
In safety thou mayst rest thee
here.
For Redmond's death thou shalt
not mourn, 780
If mine can buy his safe return.'
He turned away—his heart
throbbed high,
The tear was bursting from his
eye ;
The sense of her injustice pressed
Upon the maid's distracted
breast,—
'Stay, Wilfrid, stay ! all aid is
vain !'
He heard but turned him not
again !
He reaches now the postern-door,
Now enters—and is seen no more.

XXXI

With all the agony that e'er 790
Was gendered 'twixt suspense and
fear,
She watched the line of windows
tall
Whose Gothic lattice lights the
Hall,
Distinguished by the paly red
The lamps in dim reflection shed,
While all beside in wan moonlight
Each grated casement glimmered
white.
No sight of harm, no sound of ill,
It is a deep and midnight still.
Who looked upon the scene had
guessed 800
All in the castle were at rest—
When sudden on the windows
shone
A lightning flash just seen and
gone !
A shot is heard—again the flame
Flashed thick and fast—a volley
came !
Then echoed wildly from within

Of shout and scream the mingled
din,

And weapon-clash and maddening
cry,

Of those who kill and those who
die!—

As filled the hall with sulphurous
smoke, 810

More red, more dark, the death-
flash broke,

And forms were on the lattice
cast

That struck or struggled as they
past.

XXXII

What sounds upon the midnight
wind

Approach so rapidly behind?

It is, it is, the tramp of steeds,
Matilda hears the sound, she
speeds,

Seizes upon the leader's rein—

'O, haste to aid ere aid be vain!

Fly to the postern—gain the
hall!' 820

From saddle spring the troopers
all;

Their gallant steeds at liberty
Rung wild along the moonlight lea.

But ere they burst upon the scene
Full stubborn had the conflict
been.

When Bertram marked Matilda's
flight,

It gave the signal for the fight;
And Rokeby's veterans, seamed
with scars

Of Scotland's and of Erin's wars,
Their momentary panic o'er, 830

Stood to the arms which then they
bore—

For they were weaponed and pre-
pared

Their mistress on her way to
guard.

Then cheered them to the fight
O'Neale,

Then pealed the shot, and clashed
the steel;

The war-smoke soon with sable
breath

Darkened the scene of blood and
death,

While on the few defenders close
The bandits with redoubled blows,

And, twice driven back, yet fierce
and fell 840

Renew the charge with frantic
yell.

XXXIII

Wilfrid has fallen—but o'er him
stood

Young Redmond soiled with smoke
and blood,

Cheering his mates with heart and
hand

Still to make good their desperate
stand:

'Up, comrades, up! In Rokeby
halls

Ne'er be it said our courage falls.
What! faint ye for their savage
cry,

Or do the smoke-wreaths daunt
your eye?

These rafters have returned a
shout 850

As loud at Rokeby's wassail rout,
As thick a smoke these hearths
have given

At Hallow-tide or Christmas-even.

Stand to it yet! renew the fight

For Rokeby's and Matilda's right!

These slaves! they dare not hand
to hand

Bide buffet from a true man's
brand.'

Impetuous, active, fierce, and
young,

Upon the advancing foes he
sprung.

Woe to the wretch at whom is
bent 860

His brandished falchion's sheer
descent!

Backward they scattered as he
came,

Like wolves before the levin flame,

When, 'mid their howling conclave
driven,

Hath glanced the thunderbolt of
heaven.

Bertram rushed on — but Harpool
 clasped
 His knees, although in death he
 gasped,
 His falling corpse before him
 flung,
 And round the trammelled ruffian
 clung.
 Just then the soldiers filled the
 dome, 870
 And shouting charged the felons
 home
 So fiercely that in panic dread,
 They broke, they yielded, fell, or
 fled,
 Bertram's stern voice they heed
 no more,
 Though heard above the battle's
 roar;
 While, trampling down the dying
 man,
 He strove with volleyed threat
 and ban
 In scorn of odds, in fate's despite,
 To rally up the desperate fight.

XXXIV

Soon murkier clouds the hall en-
 fold 880
 Than e'er from battle-thunders
 rolled,
 So dense the combatants scarce
 know
 To aim or to avoid the blow.
 Smothering and blindfold grows
 the fight —
 But soon shall dawn a dismal
 light !
 Mid cries and clashing arms there
 came
 The hollow sound of rushing
 flame ;
 New horrors on the tumult dire
 Arise — the castle is on fire !
 Doubtful if chance had cast the
 brand 890
 Or frantic Bertram's desperate
 hand,
 Matilda saw — for frequent broke
 From the dim casements gusts of
 smoke,

Yon tower, which late so clear de-
 fined
 On the fair hemisphere reclined
 That, pencilled on its azure pure,
 The eye could count each embra-
 sure,
 Now, swathed within the sweeping
 cloud,
 Seems giant-spectre in his shroud ;
 Till, from each loop-hole flashing
 light, 900
 A spout of fire shines ruddy bright,
 And, gathering to united glare,
 Streams high into the midnight
 air ;
 A dismal beacon, far and wide
 That wakened Greta's slumbering
 side.
 Soon all beneath, through gallery
 long
 And pendent arch, the fire flashed
 strong,
 Snatching whatever could main-
 tain,
 Raise, or extend its furious reign ;
 Startling with closer cause of
 dread 910
 The females who the conflict fled,
 And now rushed forth upon the
 plain,
 Filling the air with clamors vain.

XXXV

But ceased not yet the hall within
 The shriek, the shout, the carnage-
 din,
 Till bursting lattices give proof
 The flames have caught the raf-
 tered roof.
 What! wait they till its beams
 amain
 Crash on the slayers and the slain ?
 The alarm is caught — the draw-
 bridge falls, 920
 The warriors hurry from the walls,
 But by the conflagration's light
 Upon the lawn renew the fight.
 Each straggling felon down was
 hewed,
 Not one could gain the sheltering
 wood ;

But forth the affrighted harper
 sprung,
 And to Matilda's robe he clung.
 Hershriek, entreaty, and command
 Stopped the pursuer's lifted hand.
 Denzil and he alive were ta'en; 930
 The rest save Bertram all are
 slain.

XXXVI

And where is Bertram?—Soaring
 high,
 The general flame ascends the
 sky;
 In gathered group the soldiers
 gaze
 Upon the broad and roaring blaze,
 When, like infernal demon, sent
 Red from his penal element,
 To plague and to pollute the air,
 His face all gore, on fire his hair,
 Forth from the central mass of
 smoke 940
 The giant form of Bertram broke!
 His brandished sword on high he
 rears,
 Then plunged among opposing
 spears;
 Round his left arm his mantle
 trussed,
 Received and foiled three lances'
 thrust;
 Nor these his headlong course
 withstood,
 Like reeds he snapped the tough
 ashwood.
 In vain his foes around him elung;
 With matchless force aside he
 flung 949
 Their boldest,—as the bull at bay
 Tosses the ban-dogs from his way,
 Through forty foes his path he
 made,
 And safely gained the forest glade.

XXXVII

Scarce was this final conflict o'er
 When from the postern Redmond
 bore
 Wilfrid, who, as of life bereft,

Had in the fatal hall been left,
 Deserted there by all his train;
 But Redmond saw and turned
 again. 959

Beneath an oak he laid him down
 That in the blaze gleamed ruddy
 brown,
 And then his mantle's clasp un-
 did;

Matilda held his drooping head,
 Till, given to breathe the freer
 air,
 Returning life repaid their care.
 He gazed on them with heavy
 sigh,—

'I could have wished even thus to
 die!'

No more he said,—for now with
 speed

Each trooper had regained his
 steed; 969

The ready palfreys stood arrayed
 For Redmond and for Rokeby's
 maid;

Two Wilfrid on his horse sustain,
 One leads his charger by the rein.
 But oft Matilda looked behind,
 As up the vale of Tees they wind,
 Where far the mansion of her sires
 Beaconed the dale with midnight
 fires.

In gloomy arch above them spread,
 The clouded heaven lowered
 bloody red; 979

Beneath in sombre light the flood
 Appeared to roll in waves of blood.
 Then one by one was heard to
 fall

The tower, the donjon-keep, the
 hall.

Each rushing down with thunder
 sound

A space the conflagration drowned;
 Till gathering strength again it
 rose,

Announced its triumph in its close,
 Shook wide its light the landscape
 o'er,

Then sunk—and Rokeby was no
 more!

CANTO SIXTH

I

THE summer sun, whose early
power

Was wont to gild Matilda's bower
And rouse her with his matin ray
Her duteous orisons to pay,
That morning sun has three times
seen

The flowers unfold on Rokeby
green,

But sees no more the slumbers fly
From fair Matilda's hazel eye;
That morning sun has three times
broke

On Rokeby's glades of elm and
oak, 10

But, rising from their sylvan
screen,

Marks no gray turrets glance be-
tween.

A shapeless mass lie keep and
tower,

That, hissing to the morning
shower,

Can but with smouldering vapor
pay

The early smile of summer day.
The peasant, to his labor bound,
Pauses to view the blackened
mound,

Striving amid the ruined space
Each well-remembered spot to
trace. 20

That length of frail and fire-
scorched wall

Once screened the hospitable
hall;

When yonder broken arch was
whole,

'T was there was dealt the weekly
dole;

And where yon tottering columns
nod

The chapel sent the hymn to God.
So flits the world's uncertain span!
Nor zeal for God nor love for man
Gives mortal monuments a date
Beyond the power of Time and
Fate. 30

The towers must share the build-
er's doom;

Ruin is theirs, and his a tomb:
But better boon benignant Heaven
To Faith and Charity has given,
And bids the Christian hope sub-
lime

Transcend the bounds of Fate and
Time.

II

Now the third night of summer
came

Since that which witnessed Roke-
by's flame.

On Brignall cliffs and Scargill
brake

The owlet's homilies awake, 40
The bittern screamed from rush
and flag,

The raven slumbered on his crag,
Forth from his den the otter
drew,—

Grayling and trout their tyrant
knew,

As between reed and sedge he
peers,

With fierce round snout and sharp-
ened ears,

Or prowling by the moonbeam cool
Watches the stream or swims the
pool;—

Perched on his wonted eyrie high,
Sleep sealed the tercelet's wearied
eye, 50

That all the day had watched so
well

The cushat dart across the dell.
In dubious beam reflected shone
That lofty cliff of pale gray stone
Beside whose base the secret cave
To rajine late a refuge gave.

The crag's wild crest of copse and
yew

On Greta's breast dark shadows
threw,

Shadows that met or shunned the
sight 59

With every change of fitful light,
As hope and fear alternate chase
Our course through life's uncertain
race.

III

Gliding by crag and copsewood
green,
A solitary form was seen
To trace with stealthy pace the
wold,
Like fox that seeks the midnight
fold,
And pauses oft, and cowers dis-
mayed

At every breath that stirs the
shade. 68

He passes now the ivy bush,—
The owl has seen him and is hush ;
He passes now the doddered oak,—
He heard the startled raven croak ;
Lower and lower he descends,
Rustle the leaves, the brushwood
bends ;

The otter hears him tread the
shore,

And dives and is beheld no more ;
And by the cliff of pale gray stone
The midnight wanderer stands
alone.

Methinks that by the moon we
trace 79

A well-remembered form and face !
That stripling shape, that cheek
so pale,

Combine to tell a rueful tale,
Of powers misused, of passion's
force,

Of guilt, of grief, and of remorse !

'T is Edmund's eye at every sound
That flings that guilty glance
around ;

'T is Edmund's trembling haste
divides

The brushwood that the cavern
hides ;

And when its narrow porch lies
bare

'T is Edmund's form that enters
there. 90

IV

His flint and steel have sparkled
bright,

A lamp hath lent the cavern light.
Fearful and quick his eye surveys

Each angle of the gloomy maze.
Since last he left that stern abode,
It seemed as none its floor had
trode ;

Untouched appeared the various
spoil,

The purchase of his comrades'
toil ;

Masks and disguises grimed with
mud,

Arms broken and defiled with
blood, 100

And all the nameless tools that aid
Night-felons in their lawless trade,
Upon the gloomy walls were hung
Or lay in nooks obscurely flung.

Still on the sordid board appear
The relics of the noontide cheer :
Flagons and emptied flasks were
there,

And bench o'erthrown and shat-
tered chair ;

And all around the semblance
showed,

As when the final revel glowed, 110
When the red sun was setting fast
And parting pledge Guy Denzil
past.

'To Rokeby treasure-vaults !' they
quaffed,

And shouted loud and wildly
laughed,

Poured maddening from the rocky
door,

And parted—to return no more !
They found in Rokeby vaults their
doom,—

A bloody death, a burning tomb !

V

There his own peasant dress he
spies,

Doffed to assume that quaint dis-
guise, 120

And shuddering thought upon his
glee

When pranked in garb of min-
strelsy.

'O, be the fatal art accurst,'
He cried, 'that moved my folly
first,

Till, bribed by bandits' base applause,
 I burst through God's and Nature's laws!
 Three summer days are scanty past
 Since I have trod this cavern last,
 A thoughtless wretch, and prompt to err —
 But O, as yet no murderer! 130
 Even now I list my comrades' cheer.
 That general laugh is in mine ear
 Which raised my pulse and steeled my heart,
 As I rehearsed my treacherous part —
 And would that all since then could seem
 The phantom of a fever's dream!
 But fatal memory notes too well
 The horrors of the dying yell
 From my despairing mates that broke
 When flashed the fire and rolled the smoke, 140
 When the avengers shouting came
 And hemmed us 'twixt the sword and flame!
 My frantic flight — the lifted brand —
 That angel's interposing hand! —
 If for my life from slaughter freed
 I yet could pay some grateful meed!
 Perchance this object of my quest
 May aid' — he turned nor spoke the rest.

VI

Due northward from the rugged hearth
 With paces five he meets the earth, 150
 Then toiled with mattock to explore
 The entrails of the cavern floor,
 Nor paused till deep beneath the ground
 His search a small steel casket found.

Just as he stooped to loose its hasp
 His shoulder felt a giant grasp;
 He started and looked up aghast,
 Then shrieked! — 'T was Bertram held him fast.
 'Fear not!' he said; but who could hear
 That deep stern voice and cease to fear? 160
 'Fear not! — By heaven, he shakes as much
 As partridge in the falcon's clutch:'
 He raised him and unloosed his hold,
 While from the opening casket rolled
 A chain and reliquaire of gold.
 Bertram beheld it with surprise,
 Gazed on its fashion and device,
 Then, cheering Edmund as he could,
 Somewhat he smoothed his rugged mood,
 For still the youth's half-lifted eye
 Quivered with terror's agony, 171
 And sidelong glanced as to explore
 In meditated flight the door.
 'Sit,' Bertram said, 'from danger free:
 Thou canst not and thou shalt not flee.
 Chance brings me hither; hill and plain
 I've sought for refuge-place in vain.
 And tell me now, thou aguish boy,
 What makest thou here? what means this toy?
 Denzil and thou, I marked, were ta'en; 180
 What lucky chance unbound your chain?
 I deemed, long since on Baliol's tower,
 Your heads were warped with sun and shower.
 Tell me the whole — and mark! naught e'er

Chafes me like falsehood or like
fear.'

Gathering his courage to his aid
But trembling still, the youth
obeyed.

VII

'Denzil and I two nights passed
o'er

In fetters on the dungeon floor.
A guest the third sad morrow
brought; ¹⁹⁰

Our hold, dark Oswald Wycliffe
sought,
And eyed my comrade long
askance

With fixed and penetrating glance.
"Guy Denzil art thou called?"—

"The same."

"At Court who served wild Buck-
ingham;

Thence banished, won a keeper's
place,

So Villiers willed, in Marwood-
chase;

That lost—I need not tell thee
why—

Thou madest thy wit thy wants
supply,

Then fought for Rokeby:—have
I guessed ²⁰⁰

My prisoner right?"—"At thy
behest."

He paused awhile, and then went
on

With low and confidential tone;—
Me, as I judge, not then he saw
Close nestled in my couch of
straw.—

"List to me, Guy. Thou know'st
the great

Have frequent need of what they
hate;

Hence, in their favor oft we see
Unscrupled, useful men like thee.
Were I disposed to bid thee live,
What pledge of faith hast thou to
give?" ²¹¹

VIII

'The ready fiend who never yet
Hath failed to sharpen Denzil's wit

Prompted his lie—"His only child
Should rest his pledge."—The
baron smiled,

And turned to me—"Thou art
his son?"

I bowed—our fetters were un-
done,

And we were led to hear apart
A dreadful lesson of his art.

Wilfrid, he said, his heir and son,
Had fair Matilda's favor won; ²²¹
And long since had their union
been

But for her father's bigot spleen,
Whose brute and blindfold party-
rage

Would, force perforce, her hand
engage

To a base kern of Irish earth,
Unknown his lineage and his birth,
Save that a dying ruffian bore
The infant brat to Rokeby door.

Gentle restraint, he said, would
lead ²³⁰

Old Rokeby to enlarge his creed;
But fair occasion he must find
For such restraint well meant and
kind,

The knight being rendered to his
charge

But as a prisoner at large.

IX

'He schooled us in a well-forged
tale

Of scheme the castle walls to
scale,

To which was leagued each Cava-
lier

That dwells upon the Tyne and
Wear, ²³⁹

That Rokeby, his parole forgot,
Had dealt with us to aid the plot.
Such was the charge which Deu-
zil's zeal

Of hate to Rokeby and O'Neale
Proffered as witness to make good,
Even though the forfeit were their
blood.

I scrupled until o'er and o'er
His prisoners' safety Wycliffe
swore;

And then — alas! what needs there more?

I knew I should not live to say
The proffer I refused that day; ²⁵⁰
Ashamed to live, yet loath to die,
I soiled me with their infamy!

'Poor youth!' said Bertram, wa-
vering still,

Unfit alike for good or ill!

But what fell next? — 'Soon as
at large

Was scrolled and signed our fatal
charge,

There never yet on tragic stage
Was seen so well a painted rage
As Oswald's showed! With loud
alarm

He called his garrison to arm; ²⁶⁰
From tower to tower, from post to
post,

He hurried as if all were lost;
Consigned to dungeon and to chain
The good old knight and all his
train;

Warned each suspected Cavalier
Within his limits to appear
To-morrow at the hour of noon
In the high church of Eglistone.' —

X

'Of Eglistone! — Even now I
passed,'

Said Bertram, 'as the night closed
fast; ²⁷⁰

Torches and cressets gleamed
around,

I heard the saw and hammer
sound,

And I could mark they toiled to
raise

A scaffold, hung with sable baize,
Which the grim headsman's scene
displayed,

Block, axe, and sawdust ready laid.
Some evil deed will there be done

Unless Matilda wed his son; —
She loves him not — 't is shrewdly
guessed

That Redmond rules the damsel's
breast. ²⁸⁰

This is a turn of Oswald's skill;

But I may meet, and foil him
still! —

How camest thou to thy free-
dom? — 'There

Lies mystery more dark and rare.
In midst of Wycliffe's well-feigned
rage,

A scroll was offered by a page,
Who told a muffled horseman late
Had left it at the Castle-gate.

He broke the seal — his cheek
showed change,

Sudden, portentous, wild, and
strange; ²⁹⁰

The mimic passion of his eye
Was turned to actual agony;

His hand like summer sapling
shook,

Terror and guilt were in his look.

Denzil he judged in time of need

Fit counsellor for evil deed;

And thus apart his counsel broke,
While with a ghastly smile he
spoke:

XI

'As in the pageants of the stage
The dead awake in this wild age,
Mortham — whom all men deemed
decreed ³⁰¹

In his own deadly snare to bleed,
Slain by a bravo whom o'er sea

He trained to aid in murdering
me, —

Mortham has 'scaped! The cow-
ard shot

The steed but harmed the rider
not."

Here with an execration fell
Bertram leaped up and paced the
cell: —

'Thine own gray head or bosom
dark,'

He muttered, 'may be surer
mark!' ³¹⁰

Then sat and signed to Edmund,
pale

With terror, to resume his tale.

'Wycliffe went on: — "Mark with
what flights

Of wildered reverie he writes: —

THE LETTER

“Ruler of Mortham’s destiny !
Though dead, thy victim lives to thee.

Once had he all that binds to life,
A lovely child, a lovelier wife ;
Wealth, fame, and friendship were
his own —

Thou gavest the word and they
are flown. ³²⁰

Mark how he pays thee : to thy
hand

He yields his honors and his land,
One boon premised ; — restore his
child !

And, from his native land exiled,
Mortham no more returns to claim
His lands, his honors, or his name ;
Refuse him this and from the slain
Thou shalt see Mortham rise
again.” —

XII

‘This billet while the baron read,
His faltering accents showed his
dread ; ³³⁰

He pressed his forehead with his
palm,

Then took a scornful tone and
calm ;

“Wild as the winds, as billows
wild !

What wot I of his spouse or child ?
Hither he brought a joyous dame,
Unknown her lineage or her name :
Her in some frantic fit he slew ;
The nurse and child in fear with-
drew.

Heaven be my witness, wist I
where

To find this youth, my kinsman’s
heir, ³⁴⁰

Unguarded I would give with
joy

The father’s arms to fold his boy,
And Mortham’s lands and towers
resign

To the just heirs of Mortham’s
line.”

Thou know’st that scarcely e’en
his fear

Suppresses Denzil’s cynic sneer ; —
“Then happy is thy vassal’s part,”
He said, “to ease his patron’s
heart !

In thine own jailer’s watchful care
Lies Mortham’s just and rightful
heir ; ³⁵⁰

Thy generous wish is fully won, —
Redmond O’Neale is Mortham’s
son.” —

XIII

‘Up starting with a frenzied look,
His clenched hand the baron
shook :

“Is Hell at work ? or dost thou
rave,

Or darest thou palter with me,
slave !

Perchance thou wot’st not, Bar-
nard’s towers

Have racks of strange and ghastly
powers.”

Denzil, who well his safety knew,
Firmly rejoined, “I tell thee true.

Thy racks could give thee but to
know ³⁶¹

The proofs which I, untortured,
show.

It chanced upon a winter night
When early snow made Stanmore
white,

That very night when first of all
Redmond O’Neale saw Rokeby-
hall,

It was my goodly lot to gain
A reliquary and a chain,

Twisted and chased of massive
gold. ³⁶⁹

Demand not how the prize I hold !

It was not given nor lent nor sold.

Gilt tablets to the chain were hung

With letters in the Irish tongue.

I hid my spoil, for there was need

That I should leave the land with
speed,

Nor then I deemed it safe to bear

On mine own person gems so rare.

Small heed I of the tablets took,

But since have spelled them by
the book ³⁷⁹

When some sojourn in Erin's land
Of their wild speech had given
command.

But darkling was the sense; the
phrase

And language those of other days,
Involved of purpose, as to foil
An interloper's prying toil.

The words but not the sense I
knew,

Till fortune gave the guiding clue.

XIV

"Three days since, was that clue
revealed

In Thorsgill as I lay concealed,
And heard at full when Rokeby's
maid ³⁹⁰

Her uncle's history displayed;
And now I can interpret well
Each syllable the tablets tell.

Mark, then: fair Edith was the
joy

Of old O'Neale of Clandeboy;
But from her sire and country
fled

In secret Mortham's lord to wed.
O'Neale, his first resentment o'er,
Despatched his son to Greta's
shore,

Enjoining he should make him
known — ⁴⁰⁰

Until his farther will were shown —
To Edith, but to her alone.

What of their ill-starred meeting
fell

Lord Wycliffe knows, and none so
well.

XV

"O'Neale it was who in despair
Robbed Mortham of his infant
heir;

He bred him in their nurture wild,
And called him murdered Connel's
child.

Soon died the nurse; the clan be-
lieved

What from their chieftain they re-
ceived. ⁴¹⁰

His purpose was that ne'er again

The boy should cross the Irish
main,

But, like his mountain sires, enjoy
The woods and wastes of Clande-
boy.

Then on the land wild troubles
came,

And stronger chieftains urged a
claim,

And wrested from the old man's
hands

His native towers, his father's
lands.

Unable then amid the strife
To guard young Redmond's rights
or life, ⁴²⁰

Late and reluctant he restores
The infant to his native shores,

With goodly gifts and letters
stored,

With many a deep conjuring word,
To Mortham and to Rokeby's lord.

Naught knew the clod of Irish
earth,

Who was the guide, of Redmond's
birth,

But deemed his chief's commands
were laid

On both, by both to be obeyed. ⁴²⁹
How he was wounded by the way

I need not, and I list not say." —

XVI

"A wondrous tale! and, grant it
true,

What," Wycliffe answered, "might
I do?

Heaven knows, as willingly as
now

I raise the bonnet from my brow,
Would I my kinsman's manors
fair

Restore to Mortham or his heir;
But Mortham is distraught —

O'Neale

Has drawn for tyranny his steel,
Malignant to our rightful cause

And trained in Rome's delusive
laws. ⁴⁴¹

Hark thee apart!" They whis-
pered long,

Till Denzil's voice grew bold and strong:

"My proofs! I never will," he said,
"Show mortal man where they
are laid.

Nor hope discovery to foreclose
By giving me to feed the crows;
For I have mates at large who
know

Where I am wont such toys to
stow.

Free me from peril and from
band, 450

These tablets are at thy com-
mand;

Nor were it hard to form some
train,

To wile old Mortham o'er the
main.

Then, lunatic's nor papist's hand
Should wrest from thine the good-
ly land."

"I like thy wit," said Wycliffe,
"well;

But here in hostage shalt thou
dwell.

Thy son, unless my purpose err,
May prove the trustier messenger.
A scroll to Mortham shall he bear
From me, and fetch these tokens
rare. 461

Gold shalt thou have, and that
good store,

And freedom, his commission o'er;
But if his faith should chance to
fail,

The gibbet frees thee from the
jail."

XVII

'Meshed in the net himself had
twined,

What subterfuge could Denzil
find?

He told me with reluctant sigh
That hidden here the tokens lie,
Conjured my swift return and aid,
By all he scoffed and disobeyed, 471
And looked as if the noose were
tied

And I the priest who left his side.

This scroll for Mortham Wycliffe
gave,

Whom I must seek by Greta's
wave,

Or in the hut where chief he hides,
Where Thorsgill's forester re-
sides. —

Thence chanced it, wandering in
the glade,

That he descried our ambus-
cade. — 479

I was dismissed as evening fell,
And reached but now this rocky
cell.'

'Give Oswald's letter.' — Bertram
read,

And tore it fiercely shred by
shred: —

'All lies and villany! to blind
His noble kinsman's generous
mind,

And train him on from day to day,
Till he can take his life away. —

And now, declare thy purpose,
youth,

Nor dare to answer, save the
truth;

If aught I mark of Denzil's art, 490
I'll tear the secret from thy
heart!' —

XVIII

'It needs not. I renounce,' he
said,

'My tutor and his deadly trade.
Fixed was my purpose to declare

To Mortham, Redmond is his heir;
To tell him in what risk he stands,
And yield these tokens to his
hands.

Fixed was my purpose to atone,
Far as I may, the evil done;

And fixed it rests — if I survive
This night, and leave this cave
alive.' — 501

'And Denzil?' — 'Let them ply
the rack,

Even till his joints and sinews
crack!

If Oswald tear him limb from
limb,

What ruth can Denzil claim from
him
Whose thoughtless youth he led
astray
And damned to this unhallowed
way?
He schooled me, faith and vows
were vain;
Now let my master reap his
gain.'—
'True,' answered Bertram, 't is
his meed; ⁵¹⁰
There 's retribution in the deed.
But thou—thou art not for our
course,
Hast fear, hast pity, hast remorse;
And he with us the gale who
braves
Must heave such cargo to the
waves,
Or lag with overloaded prone
While barks unburdened reach
the shore.'

XIX

He paused and, stretching him at
length,
Seemed to repose his bulky
strength. ⁵¹⁹
Communing with his secret mind,
As half he sat and half reclined,
One ample hand his forehead
pressed,
And one was dropped across his
breast.
The shaggy eyebrows deeper came
Above his eyes of swarthy flame;
His lip of pride awhile forbore
The haughty curve till then it
wore;
The unaltered fierceness of his
look
A shade of darkened sadness
took,—
For dark and sad a presage
pressed ⁵³⁰
Resistlessly on Bertram's breast,—
And when he spoke, his wonted
tone,
So fierce, abrupt, and brief, was
gone.

His voice was steady, low, and
deep,
Like distant waves when breezes
sleep;
And sorrow mixed with Edmund's
fear,
Its low unbroken depth to hear.

XX

'Edmund, in thy sad tale I find
The woe that warped my patron's
mind;
'T would wake the fountains of
the eye ⁵⁴⁰
In other men, but mine are dry.
Mortham must never see the fool
That sold himself base Wycliffe's
tool,
Yet less from thirst of sordid gain
Than to avenge supposed disdain.
Say Bertram rues his fault—a
word
Till now from Bertram never
heard:
Say, too, that Mortham's lord he
prays
To think but on their former days;
On Quariana's beach and rock, ⁵⁵⁰
On Cayo's bursting battle-shock,
On Darien's sands and deadly dew,
And on the dart Tlatzeca threw;—
Perchance my patron yet may
hear
More that may grace his comrade's
bier.
My soul hath felt a secret weight,
A warning of approaching fate:
A priest had said, "Return, re-
pent!"
As well to bid that rock be rent.
Firm as that flint I face mine
end; ⁵⁶⁰
My heart may burst but cannot
bend.

XXI

'The dawning of my youth with
awe
And prophecy the Dalesmen saw;
For over Redesdale it came,
As bodeful as their beacon-flame.

Edmund, thy years were scarcely
mine

When, challenging the Clans of
Tyne

To bring their best my brand to
prove,

O'er Hexham's altar hung my
glove;

But Tynedale, nor in tower nor
town, ⁵⁷⁰

Held champion meet to take it
down.

My noontide India may declare;

Like her fierce sun, I fired the air!

Like him, to wood and cave bade
fly

Her natives from mine angry eye.

Panama's maids shall long look
pale

When Risingham inspires the tale;

Chili's dark matrons long shall
tame

The froward child with Bertram's
name.

And now, my race of terror run, ⁵⁸⁰

Mine be the eve of tropic sun!

No pale gradations quench his
ray,

No twilight dews his wrath allay;

With disk like battle-target red

He rushes to his burning bed,

Dyes the wide wave with bloody
light,

Then sinks at once — and all is
night. —

XXII

'Now to thy mission, Edmund.
Fly,

Seek Mortham out, and bid him
hie

To Richmond where his troops are
laid, ⁵⁹⁰

And lead his force to Redmond's
aid.

Say till he reaches Eglistone

A friend will watch to guard his
son.

Now, fare - thee - well; for night
draws on,

And I would rest me here alone.'

Despite his ill-dissembled fear,
There swam in Edmund's eye a
tear;

A tribute to the courage high
Which stooped not in extremity,

But strove, irregularly great, ⁶⁰⁰

To triumph o'er approaching fate!

Bertram beheld the dewdrop start,

It almost touched his iron heart:

'I did not think there lived,' he
said,

'One who would tear for Bertram
shed.'

He loosened then his baldric's
hold,

A buckle broad of massive gold; —

'Of all the spoil that paid his
pains

But this with Risingham remains;

And this, dear Edmund, thou shalt
take, ⁶¹⁰

And wear it long for Bertram's
sake.

Once more — to Mortham speed
again;

Farewell! and turn thee not again.'

XXIII

The night has yielded to the morn,
And far the hours of prime are
worn.

Oswald, who since the dawn of
day

Had cursed his messenger's de-
lay,

Impatient questioned now his
train,

'Was Denzil's son returned
again?'

It chanced there answered of the
crew ⁶²⁰

A menial whom young Edmund
knew:

'No son of Denzil this,' he said;

'A peasant boy from Winston
glade,

For song and minstrelsy renowned
And knavish pranks the hamlets

round.'

'Not Denzil's son! — from Win-
ston vale! —

Then it was false, that specious
tale;

Or worse—he hath despatched
the youth

To show to Mortham's lord its
truth.

Fool that I was!—but 'tis too
late;— 630

This is the very turn of fate!—
The tale, or true or false, relies

On Denzil's evidence!—He dies!—
Ho! Provost Marshal! instantly

Lead Denzil to the gallows-tree!
Allow him not a parting word;

Short be the shrift and sure the
cord!

Then let his gory head appall
Marauders from the castle-wall.

Lead forth thy guard, that duty
done, 640

With best despatch to Egli-
stone.—

Basil, tell Wilfrid he must straight
Attend me at the castle-gate.'

XXIV

'Alas!' the old domestic said,
And shook his venerable head,
'Alas, my lord! full ill to-day
May my young master brook the
way!

The leech has spoke with grave
alarm

Of unseen hurt, of secret harm,
Of sorrow lurking at the heart, 650
That mars and lets his healing
art.'

'Tush! tell not me!—Romantic
boys

Pine themselves sick for airy toys,
I will find cure for Wilfrid soon;
Bid him for Eglistone be boune,
And quick!—I hear the dull
death-drum

Tell Denzil's hour of fate is come.'
He paused with scornful smile,
and then

Resumed his train of thought agen.
'Now comes my fortune's crisis
near! 660

Entreaty boots not—instant fear,

Naught else, can bend Matilda's
pride

Or win her to be Wilfrid's bride.
But when she sees the scaffold
placed,

With axe and block and headsman
graced,

And when she deems that to deny
Dooms Redmond and her sire to
die,

She must give way.—Then, were
the line

Of Rokeby once combined with
mine,

I gain the weather-gage of fate!
If Mortham come, he comes too
late, 671

While I, allied thus and prepared,
Bid him defiance to his beard.—

If she prove stubborn, shall I
dare

To drop the axe?—Soft! pause
we there.

Mortham still lives—yon youth
may tell

His tale—and Fairfax loves him
well;—

Else, wherefore should I now de-
lay

To sweep this Redmond from my
way?—

But she to piety perforce 680
Must yield.—Without there!
Sound to horse!'

XXV

'T was bustle in the court below,—
'Mount, and march forward!'
Forth they go;

Steeds neigh and trample all
around,

Steel rings, spears glimmer, trump-
ets sound.—

Just then was sung his parting
hymn;

And Denzil turned his eyeballs
dim,

And, scarcely conscious what he
sees,

Follows the horsemen down the
Tees;

And scarcely conscious what he
 hears, 690
 The trumpets tingle in his ears.
 O'er the long bridge they're
 sweeping now,
 The van is hid by greenwood
 bough;
 But ere the rearward had passed
 o'er,
 Guy Denzil heard and saw no
 more!
 One stroke upon the castle bell
 To Oswald rung his dying knell.

XXVI

O, for that pencil, erst profuse
 Of chivalry's emblazoned hues,
 That traced of old in Woodstock
 bower 700
 The pageant of the Leaf and
 Flower,
 And bodied forth the tourney high
 Held for the hand of Emily!
 Then might I paint the tumult
 broad
 That to the crowded abbey flowed,
 And poured, as with an ocean's
 sound,
 Into the church's ample bound!
 Then might I show each varying
 mien,
 Exulting, woful, or serene; 709
 Indifference, with his idiot stare,
 And Sympathy, with anxious air;
 Paint the dejected Cavalier,
 Doubtful, disarmed, and sad of
 cheer;
 And his proud foe, whose formal
 eye
 Claimed conquest now and mas-
 tery;
 And the brute crowd, whose envi-
 ous zeal
 Huzzas each turn of Fortune's
 wheel,
 And loudest shouts when lowest
 lie
 Exalted worth and station high. 719
 Yet what may such a wish avail?
 'Tis mine to tell an onward tale,
 Hurrying, as best I can, along

The hearers and the hasty song;—
 Like traveller when approaching
 home,
 Who sees the shades of evening
 come,
 And must not now his course de-
 lay,
 Or choose the fair but winding
 way;
 Nay, scarcely may his pace sus-
 pend,
 Where o'er his head the wildings
 bend,
 To bless the breeze that cools his
 brow 730
 Or snatch a blossom from the
 bough.

XXVII

The reverend pile lay wild and
 waste,
 Profaned, dishonored, and defaced.
 Through storied lattices no more
 In softened light the sunbeams
 pour,
 Gilding the Gothic sculpture rich
 Of shrine and monument and
 niche.
 The civil fury of the time
 Made sport of sacrilegious crime;
 For dark fanaticism rent 740
 Altar and screen and ornament,
 And peasant hands the tombs o'er-
 threw
 Of Bowes, of Rokeby, and Fitz-
 Hugh,
 And now was seen, unwonted
 sight,
 In holy walls a scaffold dight!
 Where once the priest of grace di-
 vine
 Dealt to his flock the mystic sign,
 There stood the block displayed,
 and there
 The headsman grim his hatchet
 bare,
 And for the word of hope and
 faith 750
 Resounded loud a doom of death.
 Thrice the fierce trumpet's breath
 was heard,

And echoed thrice the herald's
word,
Dooming, for breach of martial
laws
And treason to the Commons'
cause,
The Knight of Rokeby, and
O'Neale,
To stoop their heads to block and
steel.
The trumpets flourished high and
shrill,
Then was a silence dead and still;
And silent prayers to Heaven
were cast, 760
And stifed sobs were bursting fast,
Till from the crowd begun to rise
Murmurs of sorrow or surprise,
And from the distant isles there
came
Deep-muttered threats with Wy-
cliffe's name.

XXVIII

But Oswald, guarded by his band,
Powerful in evil, waved his hand,
And bade sedition's voice be dead,
On peril of the murmurer's head.
Then first his glance sought Roke-
by's Knight, 770
Who gazed on the tremendous
sight
As calm as if he came a guest
To kindred baron's feudal feast,
As calm as if that trumpet-call
Were summons to the bannered
hall;
Firm in his loyalty he stood,
And prompt to seal it with his
blood.
With downcast look drew Oswald
nigh,—
He durst not cope with Rokeby's
eye!—
And said with low and faltering
breath, 780
'Thou know'st the terms of life
and death.'
The knight then turned and sternly
smiled:
'The maiden is mine only child,

Yet shall my blessing leave her
head
If with a traitor's son she wed.'
Then Redmond spoke: 'The life
of one
Might thy malignity atone,
On me be flung a double guilt!
Spare Rokeby's blood, let mine be
spilt!'
Wycliffe had listened to his
suit, 790
But dread prevailed and he was
mute.

XXIX

And now he pours his choice of
fear
In secret on Matilda's ear;
'An union formed with me and
mine
Ensures the faith of Rokeby's line.
Consent, and all this dread array
Like morning dream shall pass
away;
Refuse, and by my duty pressed
I give the word—thou know'st
the rest.'
Matilda, still and motionless, 800
With terror heard the dread ad-
dress,
Pale as the sheeted maid who dies
To hopeless love a sacrifice;
Then wrung her hands in agony,
And round her cast bewildered
eye,
Now on the scaffold glanced, and
now
On Wycliffe's unrelenting brow.
She veiled her face, and with a
voice
Scarce audible, 'I make my choice!
Spare but their lives!—for aught
beside 810
Let Wilfrid's doom my fate de-
cide.
He once was generous!' As she
spoke,
Dark Wycliffe's joy in triumph
broke:
'Wilfrid, where loitered ye so late?
Why upon Basil rest thy weight?—

Art spell-bound by enchanter's
wand? —

Kneel, kneel, and take her yielded
hand;

Thank her with raptures, simple
boy!

Should tears and trembling speak
thy joy?'

'O hush, my sire! To prayer and
tear 820

Of mine thou hast refused thine
ear;

But now the awful hour draws
on

When truth must speak in loftier
tone.'

XXX

He took Matilda's hand: 'Dear
maid,

Couldst thou so injure me,' he said,
'Of thy poor friend so basely deem
As blend with him this barbarous
scheme?

Alas! my efforts made in vain
Might well have saved this added
pain.

But now, bear witness earth and
heaven 830

That ne'er was hope to mortal
given

So twisted with the strings of life
As this — to call Matilda wife!

I bid it now forever part,
And with the effort bursts my
heart.'

His feeble frame was worn so
low,

With wounds, with watching, and
with woe

That nature could no more sus-
tain

The agony of mental pain.
He kneeled — his lip her hand had
pressed, 840

Just then he felt the stern arrest.
Lower and lower sunk his head, —
They raised him, — but the life was
fled!

Then first alarmed his sire and
train

Tried every aid, but tried in vain.
The soul, too soft its ills to bear,
Had left our mortal hemisphere,
And sought in better world the
meed

To blameless life by Heaven de-
creed. 849

XXXI

The wretched sire beheld aghast
With Wilfrid all his projects past,
All turned and centred on his
son,

On Wilfrid all — and he was gone.
'And I am childless now,' he said;
'Childless, through that relentless
maid!

A lifetime's arts in vain essayed
Are bursting on their artist's head!
Here lies my Wilfrid dead — and
there

Comes hated Mortham for his heir,
Eager to knit in happy band 860
With Rokeby's heiress Redmond's
hand.

And shall their triumph soar o'er
all

The schemes deep-laid to work
their fall?

No! — deeds which prudence might
not dare

Appall not vengeance and despair.
The murderess weeps upon his
bier —

I'll change to real that feigned
tear!

They all shall share destruction's
shock; —

Ho! lead the captives to the block!'
But ill his provost could divine 870

His feelings, and forbore the sign.
'Slave! to the block! — or I or
they

Shall face the judgment-seat this
day!'

XXXII

The outmost crowd have heard a
sound

Like horse's hoof on hardened
ground;

Nearer it came, and yet more
 near,—
 The very death's-men paused to
 hear.
 'Tis in the churchyard now—the
 tread
 Hath waked the dwelling of the
 dead! 879
 Fresh sod and old sepulchral stone
 Return the tramp in varied tone.
 All eyes upon the gateway hung,
 When through the Gothic arch
 there sprung
 A horseman armed at headlong
 speed—
 Sable his cloak, his plume, his
 steed.
 Fire from the flinty floor was
 spurned,
 The vaults unwonted clang re-
 turned!—
 One instant's glance around he
 threw,
 From saddlebow his pistol drew.
 Grimly determined was his look!
 His charger with the spurs he
 strook — 891
 All scattered backward as he
 came,
 For all knew Bertram Risingham!
 Three bounds that noble courser
 gave;
 The first has reached the central
 nave,
 The second cleared the chancel
 wide,
 The third—he was at Wycliffe's
 side.
 Full levelled at the baron's head,
 Rung the report—the bullet
 sped — 899
 And to his long account and last
 Without a groan dark Oswald past!
 All was so quick that it might
 seem
 A flash of lightning or a dream.

XXXIII

While yet the smoke the deed
 conceals,
 Bertram his ready charger wheels;

But floundered on the pavement-
 floor
 The steed and down the rider
 bore,
 And, bursting in the headlong
 sway,
 The faithless saddle-girths gave
 way.
 'T was while he toiled him to be
 freed, 910
 And with the rein to raise the
 steed,
 That from amazement's iron trance
 All Wycliffe's soldiers waked at
 once.
 Sword, halberd, musket-butt, their
 blows
 Hailed upon Bertram as he rose;
 A score of pikes with each a wound
 Bore down and pinned him to the
 ground;
 But still his struggling force he
 rears,
 'Gainst hacking brands and stab-
 bing spears,
 Thrice from assailants shook him
 free, 920
 Once gained his feet and twice his
 knee.
 By tenfold odds oppressed at
 length,
 Despite his struggles and his
 strength,
 He took a hundred mortal wounds
 As mute as fox 'mongst mangling
 hounds;
 And when he died his parting
 groan
 Had more of laughter than of
 moan!
 They gazed as when a lion dies,
 And hunters scarcely trust their
 eyes,
 But bend their weapons on the
 slain 930
 Lest the grim king should rouse
 again!
 Then blow and insult some re-
 newed,
 And from the trunk the head had
 hewed,

But Basil's voice the deed forbade ;
 A mantle o'er the corse he laid : —
 ' Fell as he was in act and mind,
 He left no bolder heart behind :
 Then give him, for a soldier meet
 A soldier's cloak for winding
 sheet.'

XXXIV

No more of death and dying
 pang, 940
 No more of trump and bugle clang,
 Though through the sounding
 woods there come
 Banner and bugle, trump and
 drum.
 Armed with such powers as well
 had freed
 Young Redmond at his utmost
 need,
 And backed with such a band of
 horse
 As might less ample powers en-
 force,
 Possessed of every proof and sign
 That gave an heir to Mortham's
 line, 949
 And yielded to a father's arms
 An image of his Edith's charms, —
 Mortham is come, to hear and see
 Of this strange morn the history.
 What saw he? — not the church's
 floor,
 Cumbered with dead and stained
 with gore ;
 What heard he? — not the clamor-
 ous crowd,
 That shout their gratulations
 loud :
 Redmond he saw and heard alone,
 Clasped him and sobbed, ' My son !
 my son ! '

XXXV

This chanced upon a summer
 morn, 960
 When yellow waved the heavy
 corn :
 But when brown August o'er the
 land
 Called forth the reaper's busy
 band,
 A gladsome sight the sylvan road
 From Eglistone to Mortham
 showed.
 Awhile the hardy rustic leaves
 The task to bind and pile the
 sheaves,
 And maids their sickles fling aside
 To gaze on bridegroom and on
 bride,
 And childhood's wondering group
 draws near, 970
 And from the gleaner's hands the
 ear
 Drops while she folds them for a
 prayer
 And blessing on the lovely pair.
 'T was then the Maid of Rokeby
 gave
 Her plighted troth to Redmond
 brave ;
 And Teesdale can remember yet
 How Fate to Virtue paid her
 debt.
 And for their troubles bade them
 prove
 A lengthened life of peace and
 love.
 Time and Tide had thus their
 sway, 980
 Yielding, like an April day,
 Smiling noon for sullen morrow,
 Years of joy for hours of sorrow !

THE BRIDAL OF TRIERMAIN

OR

THE VALE OF SAINT JOHN

A LOVER'S TALE

INTRODUCTION

I

COME, LUCY! while 't is morning
hour

The woodland brook we needs
must pass;

So ere the sun assume his power
We shelter in our poplar bower,
Where dew lies long upon the
flower,

Though vanished from the velvet
grass.

Curbing the stream, this stony
ridge

May serve us for a sylvan bridge;
For here compelled to disunite,

Round petty isles the runnels
glide, 10

And chafing off their puny spite,
The shallow murmurers waste
their might,

Yielding to footstep free and
light

A dry-shod pass from side to
side.

II

Nay, why this hesitating pause?—
And, Lucy, as thy step withdraws,
Why sidelong eye the streamlet's
brim?

Titania's foot without a slip,
Like thine, though timid, light,
and slim,

From stone to stone might safely
trip, 20

Nor risk the glow-worm clasp to
dip

That binds her slipper's silken rim.

Or trust thy lover's strength; nor
fear

That this same stalwart arm of
mine,

Which could yon oak's prone
trunk uprear,

Shall shrink beneath the burden
dear

Of form so slender, light, and
fine.—

So — now, the danger dared at
last,

Look back and smile at perils past!

III

And now we reach the favorite
glade, 30

Paled in by copsewood, cliff, and
stone,

Where never harsher sounds in-
vade

To break affection's whispering
tone

Than the deep breeze that waves
the shade,

Than the small brooklet's feeble
moan.

Come! rest thee on thy wonted
seat;

Mossed is the stone, the turf is
green,

A place where lovers best may
meet

Who would not that their love
be seen.

The boughs that dim the summer
sky 40

Shall hide us from each lurking spy
That fain would spread the in-
vidious tale,

How Lucy of the lofty eye,
Noble in birth, in fortunes high,
She for whom lords and barons
sigh,

Meets her poor Arthur in the
dale.

IV

How deep that blush! — how deep
that sigh!

And why does Lucy shun mine
eye?

Is it because that crimson draws
Its color from some secret
cause,

Some hidden movement of the
breast,

She would not that her Arthur
guessed?

O, quicker far is lovers' ken
Than the dull glance of common
men,

And by strange sympathy can
spell

The thoughts the loved one will
not tell!

And mine in Lucy's blush saw met
The hue of pleasure and regret;

Pride mingled in the sigh her
voice,

And shared with Love the
crimson glow,

Well pleased that thou art Ar-
thur's choice,

Yet shamed thine own is
placed so low:

Thou turn'st thy self-confessing
cheek,

As if to meet the breezes cool-
ing;

Then, Lucy, hear thy tutor
speak,

For Love too has his hours of
schooling.

V

Too oft my anxious eye has spied
That secret grief thou fain
wouldst hide,

The passing pang of humbled
pride;

Too oft when through the splen-
did hall,

The loadstar of each heart and
eye,

My fair one leads the glittering
ball,

Will her stolen glance on Ar-
thur fall

With such a blush and such a
sigh!

Thou wouldst not yield for
wealth or rank

The heart thy worth and
beauty won,

Nor leave me on this mossy
bank

To meet a rival on a throne:

Why then should vain repinings
rise,

That to thy lover fate denies 80
A nobler name, a wide domain,

A baron's birth, a menial train,
Since Heaven assigned him for

his part

A lyre, a falchion, and a heart?

VI

My sword — its master must be
dumb;

But when a soldier names my
name,

Approach, my Lucy! fearless
come,

Nor dread to hear of Arthur's
shame.

My heart — mid all yon courtly
crew

Of lordly rank and lofty line, 90

Is there to love and honor true,
That boasts a pulse so warm

as mine?

They praised thy diamonds' lustre
rare —

Matched with thine eyes, I
thought it faded;

They praised the pearls that bound
thy hair —

I only saw the locks they
braided;

They talked of wealthy dower and
land,

And titles of high birth the
token —
I thought of Lucy's heart and
hand,
Nor knew the sense of what was
spoken. 100
And yet, if ranked in Fortune's
roll,
I might have learned their choice
unwise
Who rate the dower above the
soul
And Lucy's diamonds o'er her
eyes.

VII

My lyre — it is an idle toy
That borrows accents not its
own,
Like warbler of Colombian sky
That sings but in a mimic tone.
Ne'er did it sound o'er sainted
well,
Nor boasts it aught of Border
spell; 110
Its strings no feudal slogan pour,
Its heroes draw no broad clay-
more;
No shouting clans applauses raise
Because it sung their fathers'
praise;
On Scottish moor, or English down,
It ne'er was graced with fair re-
nown;
Nor won — best meed to minstrel
true —
One favoring smile from fair BUC-
CLEUCH!
By one poor streamlet sounds its
tone,
And heard by one dear maid
alone. 120

VIII

But, if thou bid'st, these tones
shall tell
Of errant knight, and damoselle;
Of the dread knot a wizard tied
In punishment of maiden's pride,
In notes of marvel and of fear
That best may charm romantic
ear.

For Lucy loves — like COLLINS,
ill-starred name!
Whose lay's requital was that
tardy Fame,
Who bound no laurel round his
living head,
Should hang it o'er his monument
• when dead, — 130
For Lucy loves to tread enchanted
strand,
And thread like him the maze of
Fairy-land;
Of golden battlements to view the
gleam,
And slumber soft by some Elysian
stream;
Such lays she loves — and, such
my Lucy's choice,
What other song can claim her
Poet's voice?

CANTO FIRST

I

WHERE is the maiden of mortal
strain
That may match with the Baron
of Triermaln?
She must be lovely and constant
and kind,
Holy and pure and humble of
mind,
Blithe of cheer and gentle of mood,
Courteous and generous and noble
of blood —
Lovely as the sun's first ray
When it breaks the clouds of an
April day;
Constant and true as the widowed
dove,
Kind as a minstrel that sings of
love; 10
Pure as the fountain in rocky cave
Where never sunbeam kissed the
wave;
Humble as maiden that loves in
vain,
Holy as hermit's vesper strain;
Gentle as breeze that but whispers
and dies,

Yet blithe as the light leaves that
 dance in its sighs;
 Courteous as monarch the morn he
 is crowned,
 Generous as spring-dews that
 bless the glad ground;
 Noble her blood as the currents
 that met
 In the veins of the noblest Planta-
 genet — 20
 Such must her form be, her mood,
 and her strain,
 That shall match with Sir Roland
 of Triermain.

II

Sir Roland de Vaux he hath laid
 him to sleep,
 His blood it was fevered, his
 breathing was deep.
 He had been pricking against the
 Scot,
 The foray was long and the skir-
 mish hot;
 His dinted helm and his buckler's
 plight
 Bore token of a stubborn fight.
 All in the castle must hold them
 still, 29
 Harpers must lull him to his rest
 With the slow soft tunes he loves
 the best
 Till sleep sink down upon his
 breast,
 Like the dew on a summer hill.

III

It was the dawn of an autumn
 day;
 The sun was struggling with frost-
 fog gray
 That like a silvery crape was
 spread
 Round Skiddaw's dim and distant
 head,
 And faintly gleamed each painted
 pane
 Of the lordly halls of Triermain,
 When that baron bold awoke. 40
 Starting he woke and loudly did
 call,

Rousing his menials in bower and
 hall
 While hastily he spoke.

IV

'Hearken, my minstrels! Which
 of ye all
 Touched his harp with that dying
 fall,
 So sweet, so soft, so faint,
 It seemed an angel's whispered
 call
 To an expiring saint?
 And hearken, my merry-men!
 What time or where
 Did she pass, that maid with her
 heavenly brow, 50
 With her look so sweet and her
 eyes so fair,
 And her graceful step and her an-
 gel air,
 And the eagle plume in her dark-
 brown hair,
 That passed from my bower e'en
 now!'

V

Answered him Richard de Bret-
 ville; he
 Was chief of the baron's min-
 strelsy,—
 'Silent, noble chieftain, we
 Have sat since midnight close,
 When such lulling sounds as the
 brooklet sings
 Murmured from our melting
 strings, 60
 And hushed you to repose.
 Had a harp-note sounded here,
 It had caught my watchful ear,
 Although it fell as faint and shy
 As bashful maiden's half-formed
 sigh
 When she thinks her lover near.'
 Answered Philip of Fasthwaite
 tall;
 He kept guard in the outer-hall,—
 'Since at eve our watch took post,
 Not a foot has thy portal crossed;
 Else had I heard the steps,
 though low 71

And light they fell as when earth
receives
In morn of frost the withered
leaves
That drop when no winds blow.'

VI

'Then come thou hither, Henry,
my page,
Whom I saved from the sack of
Hermitage,
When that dark castle, tower, and
spire,
Rose to the skies a pile of fire,
And reddened all the Nine-stane
Hill,
And the shrieks of death, that
wildly broke 80
Through devouring flame and
smothering smoke,
Made the warrior's heart-blood
chill.
The trustiest thou of all my train,
My fleetest courser thou must
rein,
And ride to Lyulph's tower,
And from the Baron of Triermain
Greet well that sage of power.
He is sprung from Druid sires
And British bards that tuned their
lyres
To Arthur's and Pendragon's
praise, 90
And his who sleeps at Dunmail-
raise.
Gifted like his gifted race,
He the characters can trace
Graven deep in elder time
Upon Hellvellyn's cliffs sublime;
Sign and sigil well doth he know,
And can bode of weal and woe,
Of kingdoms' fall and fate of wars,
From mystic dreams and course
of stars.
He shall tell if middle earth 100
To that enchanting shape gave
birth,
Or if 't was but an airy thing
Such as fantastic slumbers bring,
Framed from the rainbow's vary-
ing dyes

Or fading tints of western skies.
For, by the blessed rood I swear,
If that fair form breathe vital
air,
No other maiden by my side
Shall ever rest De Vaux's bride!'

VII

The faithful page he mounts his
steed, 110
And soon he crossed green Irth-
ing's mead,
Dashed o'er Kirkoswald's verdant
plain,
And Eden barred his course in
vain.
He passed red Penrith's Table
Round,
For feats of chivalry renowned,
Left Mayburgh's mound and
stones of power,
By Druids raised in magic hour,
And traced the Eamont's winding
way 118
Till Ulfo's lake beneath him lay.

VIII

Onward he rode, the pathway still
Winding betwixt the lake and hill;
Till, on the fragment of a rock
Struck from its base by lightning
shock,
He saw the hoary sage:
The silver moss and lichen twined,
With fern and deer-hair checked
and lined,
A cushion fit for age;
And o'er him shook the aspen-tree,
A restless rustling canopy.
Then sprung young Henry from
his selle 130
And greeted Lyulph grave,
And then his master's tale did
tell,
And then for counsel crave.
The man of years mused long and
deep,
Of time's lost treasures taking
keep,
And then, as rousing from a sleep,
His solemn answer gave.

IX

'That maid is born of middle earth
 And may of man be won,
 Though there have glided since
 her birth 140
 Five hundred years and one.
 But where 's the knight in all the
 north,
 That dare the adventure follow
 forth,
 So perilous to knightly worth,
 In the valley of Saint John?
 Listen, youth, to what I tell,
 And bind it on thy memory well;
 Nor muse that I commence the
 rhyme
 Far distant mid the wrecks of
 time.
 The mystic tale by bard and sage
 Is handed down from Merlin's
 age. 151

X

LYULPH'S TALE

'King Arthur has ridden from
 merry Carlisle
 When Pentecost was o'er:
 He journeyed like errant-knight
 the while,
 And sweetly the summer sun did
 smile
 On mountain, moss, and moor.
 Above his solitary track
 Rose Glaramara's ridgy back,
 Amid whose yawning gulfs the sun
 Cast umbered radiance red and
 dun, 160
 Though never sunbeam could dis-
 cern
 The surface of that sable tarn,
 In whose black mirror you may
 spy
 The stars while noontide lights
 the sky.
 The gallant king he skirted still
 The margin of that mighty hill;
 Rock upon rocks incumbent hung,
 And torrents, down the gullies
 flung,
 Joined the rude river that brawled
 on,

Recoiling now from crag and
 stone, 170
 Now diving deep from human
 ken,
 And raving down its darksome
 glen.
 The monarch judged this desert
 wild,
 With such romantic ruin piled,
 Was theatre by Nature's hand
 For feat of high achievement
 planned.

XI

'O, rather he chose, that monarch
 bold,
 On venturous quest to ride
 In plate and mail by wood and
 wold
 Than, with ermine trapped and
 cloth of gold, 180
 In princely bower to bide;
 The bursting crash of a foeman's
 spear,
 As it shivered against his mail,
 Was merrier music to his ear
 Than courtier's whispered tale:
 And the clash of Caliburn more
 dear,
 When on the hostile casque it
 rung,
 Than all the lays
 To the monarch's praise
 That the harpers of Reged sung.
 He loved better to rest by wood or
 river 191
 Than in bower of his bride, Dame
 Guenever,
 For he left that lady so lovely of
 cheer
 To follow adventures of danger
 and fear;
 And the frank-hearted monarch
 full little did wot
 That she smiled in his absence on
 brave Lancelot.

XII

'He rode till over down and dell
 The shade more broad and deeper
 fell;

And though around the mountain's head
 Flowed streams of purple and gold
 and red, 200
 Dark at the base, unblest by
 beam,
 Frowned the black rocks and
 roared the stream.
 With toil the king his way pursued
 By lonely Threlkeld's waste and
 wood,
 Till on his course obliquely shone
 The narrow valley of SAINT JOHN,
 Down sloping to the western sky
 Where lingering sunbeams love to
 lie.
 Right glad to feel those beams
 again,
 The king drew up his charger's
 rein; 210
 With gauntlet raised he screened
 his sight,
 As dazzled with the level light,
 And from beneath his glove of
 mail
 Scanned at his ease the lovely
 vale,
 While 'gainst the sun his armor
 bright
 Gleamed ruddy like the beacon's
 light.

XIII

'Paled in by many a lofty hill,
 The narrow dale lay smooth and
 still,
 And, down its verdant bosom led,
 A winding brooklet found its
 bed. 220
 But midmost of the vale a mound
 Arose with airy turrets crowned,
 Buttress, and rampire's circling
 bound,
 And mighty keep and tower;
 Seemed some primeval giant's
 hand
 The castle's massive walls had
 planned,
 A ponderous bulwark to with-
 stand

Ambitious Nimrod's power.
 Above the moated entrance slung,
 The balanced drawbridge trem-
 bling hung, 230
 As jealous of a foe;
 Wicket of oak, as iron hard,
 With iron studded, clenched, and
 barred,
 And pronged portcullis, joined to
 guard
 The gloomy pass below.
 But the gray walls no banners
 crowned,
 Upon the watchtower's airy round
 No warder stood his horn to
 sound,
 No guard beside the bridge was
 found,
 And where the Gothic gateway
 frowned 240
 Glanced neither bill nor bow.

XIV

'Beneath the castle's gloomy pride,
 In ample round did Arthur ride
 Three times; nor living thing he
 spied,
 Nor heard a living sound,
 Save that, awakening from her
 dream,
 The owlet now began to scream
 In concert with the rushing stream
 That washed the battled mound.
 He lighted from his goodly steed,
 And he left him to graze on bank
 and mead; 251
 And slowly he climbed the narrow
 way
 That reached the entrance grim
 and gray,
 And he stood the outward arch
 below,
 And his bugle-horn prepared to
 blow
 In summons blithe and bold,
 Deeming to rouse from iron sleep
 The guardian of this dismal keep,
 Which well he guessed the hold
 Of wizard stern, or goblin grim, 260
 Or pagan of gigantic limb,
 The tyrant of the wold.

XV

'The ivory bugle's golden tip
Twice touched the monarch's man-
ly lip,

And twice his hand withdrew. —
Think not but Arthur's heart was
good!

His shield was crossed by the
blessed rood:

Had a pagan host before him
stood,

He had charged them through
and through;

Yet the silence of that ancient
place 270

Sunk on his heart, and he paused
a space

Ere yet his horn he blew.

But, instant as its larum rung,
The castle gate was open flung,
Portcullis rose with crashing
groan

Full harshly up its groove of
stone;

The balance-beams obeyed the
blast,

And down the trembling draw-
bridge cast;

The vaulted arch before him lay
With naught to bar the gloomy
way, 280

And onward Arthur paced with
hand

On Caliburn's resistless brand.

XVI

'A hundred torches flashing
bright

Dispelled at once the gloomy
night

That loured along the walls,
And showed the king's astonished
sight

The inmates of the halls.

Nor wizard stern, nor goblin grim,
Nor giant huge of form and limb,

Nor heathen knight, was there;
But the cressets which odors flung
aloft 291

Showed by their yellow light and
soft

A band of damsels fair.

Onward they came, like summer
wave

That dances to the shore;

An hundred voices welcome gave,
And welcome o'er and o'er!

An hundred lovely hands assail
The bucklers of the monarch's
mail,

And busy labored to unhasp 300
Rivet of steel and iron clasp.

One wrapped him in a mantle fair,
And one flung odors on his hair;

His short curled ringlets one
smoothed down,

One wreathed them with a myrtle
crown.

A bride upon her wedding-day
Was tended ne'er by troop so
gay.

XVII

'Loud laughed they all, — the king
in vain

With questions tasked the giddy
train;

Let him entreat or crave or call,
'T was one reply — loud laughed
they all. 311

Then o'er him mimic chains they
flung

Framed of the fairest flowers of
spring;

While some their gentle force
unite

Onward to drag the wondering
knight,

Some bolder urge his pace with
blows,

Dealt with the lily or the rose.
Behind him were in triumph borne

The warlike arms he late had
worn. 319

Four of the train combined to rear
The terrors of Tintadgel's spear;

Two, laughing at their lack of
strength,

Dragged Caliburn in cumbrous
length;

One, while she aped a martial
stride,

Placed on her brows the helmet's
pride ;
Then screamed 'twixt laughter
and surprise
To feel its depth o'erwhelm her
eyes.
With revel-shout and triumph-
song
Thus gayly marched the giddy
throng.

XVIII

' Through many a gallery and hall
They led, I ween, their royal
thrall; ³³¹
At length, beneath a fair arcade
Their march and song at once
they staid.
The eldest maiden of the band —
The lovely maid was scarce
eighteen —
Raised with imposing air her hand,
And reverent silence did com-
mand
On entrance of their Queen,
And they were mute. — But as a
glance
They steal on Arthur's counte-
nance ³⁴⁰
Bewildered with surprise,
Their smothered mirth again 'gan
speak
In archly dimpled chin and cheek
And laughter-lighted eyes.

XIX

' The attributes of those high days
Now only live in minstrel-lays;
For Nature, now exhausted, still
Was then profuse of good and
ill.
Strength was gigantic, valor high,
And wisdom soared beyond the
sky, ³⁵⁰
And beauty had such matchless
beam
As lights not now a lover's dream.
Yet e'en in that romantic age
Ne'er were such charms by
mortal seen
As Arthur's dazzled eyes engage,

When forth on that enchanted
stage
With glittering train of maid and
page
Advanced the castle's queen!
While up the hall she slowly
passed, ³⁵⁹
Her dark eye on the king she cast
That flashed expression strong;
The longer dwelt that lingering
look,
Her cheek the livelier color took,
And scarce the shame-faced king
could brook
The gaze that lasted long.
A sage who had that look espied,
Where kindling passion strove
with pride,
Had whispered, " Prince, be-
ware!
From the chafed tiger rend the
prey,
Rush on the lion when at bay, ³⁷⁰
Bar the fell dragon's blighted way,
But shun that lovely snare!"

XX

' At once, that inward strife sup-
pressed,
The dame approached her warlike
guest,
With greeting in that fair degree
Where female pride and courtesy
Are blended with such passing art
As awes at once and charms the
heart.
A courtly welcome first she gave,
Then of his goodness 'gan to crave
Construction fair and true ³⁸¹
Of her light maidens' idle mirth,
Who drew from lonely glens their
birth
Nor knew to pay to stranger worth
And dignity their due;
And then she prayed that he would
rest
That night her castle's honored
guest.
The monarch meetly thanks ex-
pressed;
The banquet rose at her behest,

With lay and tale, and laugh and
jest, 390
Apace the evening flew.

XXI

'The lady sate the monarch by,
Now in her turn abashed and
shy,
And with indifference seemed to
hear
The toys he whispered in her
ear.

Her bearing modest was and fair,
Yet shadows of constraint were
there

That showed an over-cautious care
Some inward thought to hide;
Oft did she pause in full reply, 400
And oft cast down her large dark
eye,

Oft checked the soft voluptuous
sigh

That heaved her bosom's pride.
Slight symptoms these, but shep-
herds know

How hot the mid-day sun shall
glow

From the mist of morning sky;
And so the wily monarch guessed
That this assumed restraint ex-
pressed

More ardent passions in the breast
Than ventured to the eye. 410

Closer he pressed while beakers
rang,

While maidens laughed and min-
strels sang,

Still closer to her ear —
But why pursue the common tale?
Or wherefore show how knights
prevail

When ladies dare to hear?
Or wherefore trace from what
slight cause

Its source one tyrant passion
draws,

Till, mastering all within,
Where lives the man that has not
tried 420

How mirth can into folly glide
And folly into sin!

CANTO SECOND

LYULPH'S TALE CONTINUED

I

'ANOTHER day, another day,
And yet another, glides away!
The Saxon stern, the pagan Dane,
Maraud on Britain's shores again.
Arthur, of Christendom the flower,
Lies loitering in a lady's bower;
The horn that foemen wont to fear
Sounds but to wake the Cumbrian
deer,

And Caliburn, the British pride,
Hangs useless by a lover's side. 10

II

'Another day, another day,
And yet another, glides away.
Heroic plans in pleasure drowned,
He thinks not of the Table Round;
In lawless love dissolved his life,
He thinks not of his beauteous
wife:

Better he loves to snatch a flower
From bosom of his paramour
Than from a Saxon knight to wrest
The honors of his heathen crest;
Better to wreath the mid tresses
brown 21

The heron's plume her hawk struck
down

Than o'er the altar give to flow
The banners of a Paynim foe.
Thus week by week and day by
day

His life inglorious glides away;
But she that soothes his dream
with fear

Beholds his hour of waking near.

III

'Much force have mortal charms
to stay 29

Our pace in Virtue's toilsome way;
But Guendolen's might far out-
shine

Each maid of merely mortal line.
Her mother was of human birth,
Her sire a Genie of the earth,

In days of old deemed to preside
 O'er lovers' wiles and beauty's
 pride,
 By youths and virgins worshipped
 long
 With festive dance and choral
 song,
 Till, when the cross to Britain
 came, 39
 On heathen altars died the flame.
 Now, deep in Wastdale solitude,
 The downfall of his rights he rued,
 And born of his resentment heir,
 He trained to guile that lady fair,
 To sink in slothful sin and shame
 The champions of the Christian
 name.
 Well skilled to keep vain thoughts
 alive,
 And all to promise, naught to give,
 The timid youth had hope in store,
 The bold and pressing gained no
 more. 50
 As wildered children leave their
 home
 After the rainbow's arch to roam,
 Her lovers bartered fair esteem,
 Faith, fame, and honor, for a
 dream.

IV

'Her sire's soft arts the soul to
 tame
 She practised thus — till Arthur
 came;
 Then frail humanity had part,
 And all the mother claimed her
 heart.
 Forgot each rule her father gave,
 Sunk from a princess to a slave, 60
 Too late must Guendolen deplore,
 He that has all can hope no more!
 Now must she see her lover strain
 At every turn her feeble chain,
 Watch to new-bind each knot and
 shrink
 To view each fast-decaying link.
 Art she invokes to Nature's aid,
 Hervest to zone, her locks to braid;
 Each varied pleasure heard her
 call,

The feast, the tourney, and the
 ball: 70
 Her storied lore she next applies,
 Taxing her mind to aid her eyes;
 Now more than mortal wise and
 then
 In female softness sunk again:
 Now raptured with each wish com-
 plying,
 With feigned reluctance now deny-
 ing;
 Each charm she varied to retain
 A varying heart — and all in vain!

V

'Thus in the garden's narrow
 bound
 Flanked by some castle's Gothic
 round, 80
 Fain would the artist's skill pro-
 vide
 The limits of his realms to hide.
 The walks in labyrinths he twines,
 Shade after shade with skill com-
 bines
 With many a varied flowery knot
 And copse and arbor decks the
 spot,
 Tempting the hasty foot to stay
 And linger on the lovely way —
 Vain art! vain hope! 't is fruitless
 all!
 At length we reach the bounding
 wall, 90
 And, sick of flower and trim-
 dressed tree,
 Long for rough glades and forest
 free.

VI

'Three summer months had scantily
 flown
 When Arthur in embarrassed
 tone
 Spoke of his liegemen and his
 throne;
 Said all too long had been his stay,
 And duties which a monarch sway,
 Duties unknown to humbler men,
 Must tear her knight from Guen-
 dolen.

She listened silently the while, ¹⁰⁰
 Her mood expressed in bitter
 smile;
 Beneath her eye must Arthur
 quail
 And oft resume the unfinished
 tale,
 Confessing by his downcast eye
 The wrong he sought to justify.
 He ceased. A moment mute she
 gazed,
 And then her looks to heaven she
 raised;
 One palm her temples veiled to
 hide
 The tear that sprung in spite of
 pride; ¹⁰⁹
 The other for an instant pressed
 The foldings of her silken vest!

VII

'At her reproachful sign and look,
 The hint the monarch's conscience
 took.
 Eager he spoke — "No, lady, no!
 Deem not of British Arthur so,
 Nor think he can deserter prove
 To the dear pledge of mutual love.
 I swear by sceptre and by sword,
 As belted knight and Britain's
 lord, ¹¹⁹
 That if a boy shall claim my care,
 That boy is born a kingdom's heir;
 But, if a maiden Fate allows,
 To choose that mate a fitting
 spouse,
 A summer-day in lists shall strive
 My knights — the bravest knights
 alive —
 And he, the best and bravest tried,
 Shall Arthur's daughter claim for
 bride."
 He spoke with voice resolved and
 high —
 The lady deigned him not reply.

VIII

'At dawn of morn ere on the
 brake ¹³⁰
 His matins did a warbler make
 Or stirred his wing to brush away

A single dewdrop from the spray,
 Ere yet a sunbeam through the
 mist
 The castle-battlements had kissed,
 The gates revolve, the drawbridge
 falls,
 And Arthur sallies from the walls.
 Doffed his soft garb of Persia's
 loom,
 And steel from spur to helmet
 plume,
 His Lybian steed full proudly
 trode, ¹⁴⁰
 And joyful neighed beneath his
 load.
 The monarch gave a passing sigh
 To penitence and pleasures by,
 When, lo! to his astonished ken
 Appeared the form of Guendolen.

IX

'Beyond the outmost wall she
 stood,
 Attired like huntress of the wood:
 Sandalled her feet, her ankles
 bare,
 And eagle-plumage decked her
 hair;
 Firm was her look, her bearing
 bold, ¹⁵⁰
 And in her hand a cup of gold.
 "Thou goest!" she said, "and
 ne'er again
 Must we two meet in joy or pain.
 Full fain would I this hour delay,
 Though weak the wish — yet wilt
 thou stay?
 No! thou look'st forward. Still
 attend, —
 Part we like lover and like friend."
 She raised the cup — "Not this the
 juice
 The sluggish vines of earth pro-
 duce;
 Pledge we at parting in the
 draught ¹⁶⁰
 Which Genii love!" — she said
 and quaffed;
 And strange unwonted lustres fly
 From her flushed cheek and spar-
 kling eye.

X

'The courteous monarch bent him
low

And, stooping down from saddle-
bow,

Lifted the cup in act to drink.

A drop escaped the goblet's
brink —

Intense as liquid fire from hell,

Upon the charger's neck it fell.

Screaming with agony and fright,

He bolted twenty feet upright —

The peasant still can show the
dint 172

Where his hoofs lighted on the
flint. —

From Arthur's hand the goblet
flew,

Scattering a shower of fiery dew

That burned and blighted where
it fell!

The frantic steed rushed up the
dell,

As whistles from the bow the
reed;

Nor bit nor rein could check his
speed

Until he gained the hill; 180

Then breath and sinew failed
apace,

And, reeling from the desperate
race,

He stood exhausted, still.

The monarch, breathless and
amazed,

Back on the fatal castle gazed —

Nor tower nor donjon could he
spy,

Darkening against the morning
sky;

But on the spot where once they
frowned

The lonely streamlet brawled
around

A tufted knoll, where dimly shone
Fragments of rock and rifted

stone. 191

Musing on this strange hap the
while,

The king wends back to fair Car-
lisle;

And cares that cumber royal sway
Wore memory of the past away.

XI

'Full fifteen years and more were
sped,

Each brought new wreaths to
Arthur's head.

Twelve bloody fields with glory
fought

The Saxons to subjection brought:

Rython, the mighty giant, slain 200

By his good brand, relieved Bre-
tagne:

The Pictish Gillamore in fight

And Roman Lucius owned his
might;

And wide were through the world
renowned

The glories of his Table Round.

Each knight who sought adven-
turous fame

To the bold court of Britain came,

And all who suffered causeless
wrong,

From tyrant proud or faitour
strong,

Sought Arthur's presence to com-
plain, 210

Nor there for aid implored in vain.

XII

'For this the king with pomp and
pride

Held solemn court at Whitsun-
tide,

And summoned prince and peer,
All who owed homage for their

land,

Or who craved knighthood from
his hand,

Or who had succour to demand,

To come from far and near.

At such high tide were glee and
game

Mingled with feats of martial
fame, 220

For many a stranger champion
came

In lists to break a spear;
And not a knight of Arthur's host,

Save that he trode some foreign
coast,
But at this feast of Pentecost
Before him must appear.
Ah, minstrels! when the Table
Round
Arose with all its warriors
crowned,
There was a theme for bards to
sound
In triumph to their string! 230
Five hundred years are past and
gone,
But time shall draw his dying
groan
Ere he behold the British throne
Begirt with such a ring!

XIII

'The heralds named the appointed
spot,
As Caerleon or Camelot,
Or Carlisle fair and free.
At Penrith now the feast was set,
And in fair Eamont's vale were
met

The flower of chivalry. 240
There Galahad sate with manly
grace,
Yet maiden meekness in his face;
There Morolt of the iron mace,
And love-lorn Tristrem there;
And Dinadam with lively glance,
And Lanval with the fairy lance,
And Mordred with his look
askance,

Brunor and Bevidere.
Why should I tell of numbers
more?

Sir Cay, Sir Bannier, and Sir
Bore, 250

Sir Carodac the keen,
The gentle Gawain's courteous
lore,

Hector de Mares and Pellinore,
And Lancelot, that evermore
Looked stolen-wise on the queen.

XIV

'When wine and mirth did most
abound

And harpers played their blithest
round,

A shrilly trumpet shook the
ground

And marshals cleared the ring;
A maiden on a palfrey white, 260
Heading a band of damsels bright,
Paced through the circle to alight
And kneel before the king.

Arthur with strong emotion saw
Her graceful boldness checked by
awe,

Her dress like huntress of the
wold,

Her bow and baldric trapped with
gold,

Her sandalled feet, her ankles
bare,

And the eagle-plume that decked
her hair.

Graceful her veil she backward
flung — 270

The king, as from his seat he
sprung,

Almost cried, "Guendolen!"

But 't was a face more frank and
wild,

Betwixt the woman and the child,
Where less of magic beauty smiled

Than of the race of men;

And in the forehead's haughty
grace

The lines of Britain's royal race,
Pendragon's you might ken.

XV

'Faltering, yet gracefully she
said — 280

"Great Prince! behold an orphan
maid,

In her departed mother's name,
A father's vowed protection claim!

The vow was sworn in desert
lone

In the deep valley of Saint John."

At once the king the suppliant
raised,

And kissed her brow, her beauty
praised;

His vow, he said, should well be
kept,

Ere in the sea the sun was
dipped,—
Then conscious glanced upon his
queen: 290
But she, unruffled at the scene
Of human frailty construed mild,
Looked upon Lancelot and smiled.

XVI

“Up! up! each knight of gallant
crest

Take buckler, spear, and brand!
He that to-day shall bear him best
Shall win my Gyneth's hand.
And Arthur's daughter when a
bride

Shall bring a noble dower,
Both fair Strath-Clyde and Reged
wide, 300

And Carlisle town and tower.”
Then might you hear each valiant
knight

To page and squire that cried,
“Bring my armor bright and my
courser wight;

'T is not each day that a warrior's
might

May win a royal bride.”
Then cloaks and caps of mainte-
nance

In haste aside they fling;
The helmets glance and gleams
the lance,

And the steel-weaved hauberks
ring. 310

Small care had they of their peace-
ful array,

They might gather it that wolde;
For brake and bramble glittered
gay

With pearls and cloth of gold.

XVII

“Within trumpet sound of the Ta-
ble Round,

Were fifty champions free,
And they all arise to fight that
prize,—

They all arise but three.
Nor love's fond troth nor wedlock's
oath

* One gallant could withhold, 320
For priests will allow of a broken
vow

For penance or for gold.
But sigh and glance from ladies
bright

Among the troop were thrown,
To plead their right and true-love
plight,

And plain of honor flown.
The knights they busied them so
fast

With buckling spur and belt
That sigh and look by ladies cast
Were neither seen nor felt. 330

From pleading or upbraiding
glance

Each gallant turns aside,
And only thought, “If speeds my
lance,

A queen becomes my bride!
She has fair Strath-Clyde and
Reged wide,

And Carlisle tower and town;
She is the loveliest maid, beside,
That ever heired a crown.”

So in haste their coursers they be-
stride

And strike their visors down. 340

XVIII

“The champions, armed in martial
sort,

Have thronged into the list,
And but three knights of Arthur's
court

Are from the tourney missed.
And still these lovers' fame sur-
vives

For faith so constant shown,—
There were two who loved their
neighbors' wives,

And one who loved his own.
The first was Lancelot de Lac,
The second Tristrem bold, 350

The third was valiant Carodac,
Who won the cup of gold,
What time, of all King Arthur's
crew—

Thereof came jeer and laugh—
He, as the mate of lady true,

Alone the cup could quaff.
Though envy's tongue would fain
surmise

That, but for very shame,
Sir Carodac to fight that prize
Had given both cup and dame,
Yet, since but one of that fair
court 361

Was due to wedlock's shrine,
Brand him who will with base re-
port,
He shall be free from mine.

XIX

'Now caracoled the steeds in air,
Now plumes and pennons wan-
toned fair,

As all around the lists so wide
In panoply the champions ride.
King Arthur saw with startled
eye

The flower of chivalry march by,
The bulwark of the Christian
creed, 371

The kingdom's shield in hour of
need.

Too late he thought him of the woe
Might from their civil conflict flow;
For well he knew they would not
part

Till cold was many a gallant heart.
His hasty vow he 'gan to rue,
And Gyneth then apart he drew;
To her his leading-staff resigned,
But added caution grave and kind.

XX

"Thou see'st, my child, as pro-
mise-bound, 381

I bid the trump for tourney sound.
Take thou my warder as the queen
And umpire of the martial scene;
But mark thou this:—as Beauty
bright

Is polar star to valiant knight,
As at her word his sword he draws,
His fairest guerdon her applause,
So gentle maid should never ask
Of knighthood vain and dangerous
task; 390

And Beauty's eyes should ever be

Like the twin stars that soothe
the sea,

And Beauty's breath should whis-
per peace

And bid the storm of battle cease.
I tell thee this lest all too far

These knights urge tourney into
war.

Blithe at the trumpet let them go,
And fairly counter blow for
blow;—

No striplings these, who succor
need 399

For a razed helm or falling steed.
But, Gyneth, when the strife grows
warm

And threatens death or deadly
harm,

Thy sire entreats, thy king com-
mands,

Thou drop the warder from thy
hands.

Trust, thou thy father with thy
fate,

Doubt not he choose thee fitting
mate;

Nor be it said through Gyneth's
pride

A rose of Arthur's chaplet died."

XXI

'A proud and discontented glow
O'ershadowed Gyneth's brow of
snow; 410

She put the warder by:—

"Reserve thy boon, my liege," she
said,

"Thus chaffered down and limited,
Debased and narrowed for a maid
Of less degree than I.

No petty chief but holds his heir
At a more honored price and rare
Than Britain's King holds me!

Although the sun-burned maid for
dower

Has but her father's rugged tower,
His barren hill and lee." 421

King Arthur swore, "By crown
and sword,

As belted knight and Britain's
lord,

That a whole summer's day should
strive
His knights, the bravest knights
alive! "—

"Recall thine oath! and to her
glen

Poor Gyneth can return agen;
Not on thy daughter will the stain
That soils thy sword and crown
remain.

But think not she will e'er be bride
Save to the bravest, proved and
tried; ⁴³¹

Pendragon's daughter will not fear
For clashing sword or splintered
spear,

Nor shrink though blood should
flow;

And all too well sad Guendolen
Hath taught the faithlessness of
men

That child of hers should pity when
Their meed they undergo."

XXII

'He frowned and sighed, the mon-
arch bold:—

"I give—what I may not with-
hold; ⁴⁴⁰

For, not for danger, dread, or
death,

Must British Arthur break his
faith.

Too late I mark thy mother's art
Hath taught thee this relentless
part.

I blame her not, for she had wrong,
But not to these my faults be-
long.

Use then the warder as thou wilt;
But trust me that, if life be spilt,
In Arthur's love, in Arthur's
grace,

Gyneth shall lose a daughter's
place." ⁴⁵⁰

With that he turned his head
aside,

Nor brooked to gaze upon her
pride,

As with the truncheon raised she
sate

The arbitress of mortal fate;
Nor brooked to mark in ranks dis-
posed

How the bold champions stood op-
posed,

For shrill the trumpet-flourish fell
Upon his ear like passing bell!

Then first from sight of martial
fray

Did Britain's hero turn away. ⁴⁶⁰

XXIII

'But Gyneth heard the clangor
high

As hears the hawk the partridge
cry.

O, blame her not! the blood was
hers

That at the trumpet's summons
stirs!—

And e'en the gentlest female eye
Might the brave strife of chivalry
Awhile untroubled view;

So well accomplished was each
knight

To strike and to defend in fight,
Their meeting was a goodly sight

While plate and mail held true.
The lists with painted plumes were

strown, ⁴⁷²
Upon the wind at random thrown,

But helm and breastplate bloodless
shone,

It seemed their feathered crests
alone

Should this encounter rue.
And ever, as the combat grows,

The trumpet's cheery voice arose,
Like lark's shrill song the flourish

flows,
Heard while the gale of April

blows ⁴⁸⁰
The merry greenwood through.

XXIV

'But soon to earnest grew their
game,

The spears drew blood, the swords
struck flame,

And, horse and man, to ground
there came

Knights who shall rise no
more !
Gone was the pride the war that
graced,
Gay shields were cleft and crests
defaced,
And steel coats riven and helms
unbraced,
And pennons streamed with
gore.
Gone too were fence and fair ar-
ray, 490
And desperate strength made
deadly way
At random through the bloody
fray,
And blows were dealt with head-
long sway,
Unheeding where they fell ;
And now the trumpet's clamors
seem
Like the shrill sea-bird's wailing
scream
Heard o'er the whirlpool's gulping
stream,
The sinking seaman's knell !

XXV

'Seemed in this dismal hour that
Fate
Would Camlan's ruin antedate, 500
And spare dark Mordred's crime ;
Already gasping on the ground
Lie twenty of the Table Round,
Of chivalry the prime.
Arthur in anguish tore away
From head and beard his tresses
gray,
And she, proud Gyneth, felt dis-
may
And quaked with ruth and fear ;
But still she deemed her mother's
shade
Hung o'er the tumult, and for-
bade 510
The sign that had the slaughter
staid,
And chid the rising tear.
Then Brunor, Taulas, Mador, fell,
Helias the White, and Lionel,
And many a champion more ;

Rochement and Dinadam are
down,
And Ferrand of the Forest Brown
Lies gasping in his gore.
Vanoc, by mighty Morolt pressed
Even to the confines of the list, 520
Young Vanoc of the beardless
face —
Fame spoke the youth of Merlin's
race —
O'erpowered at Gyneth's footstool
bled,
His heart's-blood dyed her sandals
red.
But then the sky was overcast,
Then howled at once a whirlwind's
blast,
And, rent by sudden throes,
Yawned in mid lists the quaking
earth,
And from the gulf — tremendous
birth ! —
The form of Merlin rose. 530

XXVI

' Sternly the Wizard Prophet eyed
The dreary lists with slaughter
dyed,
And sternly raised his hand : —
" Madmen," he said, " your strife
forbear !
And thou, fair cause of mischief,
hear
The doom thy fates demand !
Long shall close in stony sleep
Eyes for ruth that would not weep ;
Iron lethargy shall seal 539
Heart that pity scorned to feel.
Yet, because thy mother's art
Warped thine unsuspecting heart,
And for love of Arthur's race
Punishment is blent with grace,
Thou shalt bear thy penance lone
In the valley of Saint John,
And this weird shall overtake
thee ;
Sleep until a knight shall wake
thee,
For feats of arms as far renowned
As warrior of the Table Round.
Long endurance of thy slumber

Well may teach the world to
 number 552
 All their woes from Gyneth's
 pride,
 When the Red Cross champions
 died."

XXVII

'As Merlin speaks, on Gyneth's
 eye

Slumber's load begins to lie;
 Fear and anger vainly strive
 Still to keep its light alive.
 Twice with effort and with pause
 O'er her brow her hand she
 draws; 560

Twice her strength in vain she
 tries

From the fatal chair to rise;
 Merlin's magic doom is spoken,
 Vanoc's death must now be wro-
 ken.

Slow the dark-fringed eyelids fall,
 Curtaining each azure ball,
 Slowly as on summer eves
 Violets fold their dusky leaves.
 The weighty baton of command
 Now bears down her sinking
 hand, 570

On her shoulder droops her head;
 Net of pearl and golden thread
 Bursting gave her locks to flow
 O'er her arm and breast of snow.
 And so lovely seemed she there,
 Spell-bound in her ivory chair,
 That her angry sire repenting
 Craved stern Merlin for relenting,
 And the champions for her sake
 Would again the contest wake; 580
 Till in necromantic night
 Gyneth vanished from their sight.

XXVIII

'Still she bears her weird alone
 In the Valley of Saint John;
 And her semblance oft will seem,
 Mingling in a champion's dream,
 Of her weary lot to plain
 And crave his aid to burst her
 chain.

While her wondrous tale was new

Warriors to her rescue drew, 590
 East and west, and south and north,
 From the Liffy, Thames, and
 Forth.

Most have sought in vain the glen,
 Tower nor castle could they ken;
 Not at every time or tide,
 Nor by every eye, descried.
 Fast and vigil must be borne,
 Many a night in watching worn,
 Ere an eye of mortal powers
 Can discern those magic towers.
 Of the persevering few 601
 Some from hopeless task with-
 drew

When they read the dismal threat
 Graved upon the gloomy gate.
 Few have braved the yawning
 door,

And those few returned no more.
 In the lapse of time forgot,
 Wellnigh lost is Gyneth's lot;
 Sound her sleep as in the tomb
 Till wakened by the trump of
 doom.' 610

END OF LYULPH'S TALE

I

HERE pause, my tale; for all too
 soon,
 My Lucy, comes the hour of noon.
 Already from thy lofty dome
 Its courtly inmates 'gin to roam,
 And each, to kill the goodly day
 That God has granted them, his
 way

Of lazy sauntering has sought;
 Lordlings and witlings not a
 few,

Incapable of doing aught,
 Yet ill at ease with naught to
 do. 620

Here is no longer place for me;
 For, Lucy, thou wouldst blush to
 see

Some phantom fashionably thin,
 With limb of lath and kerchiefed
 chin

And lounging gape or sneering
 grin,

Steal sudden on our privacy.
 And how should I, so humbly
 born,
 Endure the graceful spectre's
 scorn?
 Faith! ill, I fear, while conjuring
 wand 629
 Of English oak is hard at hand.

II

Or grant the hour be all too soon
 For Hessian boot and pantaloons,
 And grant the lounge seldom
 strays
 Beyond the smooth and gravelled
 maze,
 Laud we the gods that Fashion's
 train
 Holds hearts of more adventurous
 strain.
 Artists are hers who scorn to
 trace
 Their rules from Nature's bound-
 less grace,
 But their right paramount assert
 To limit her by pedant art, 640
 Damning whate'er of vast and fair
 Exceeds a canvas three feet
 square.
 This thicket, for their *gumption*
 fit,
 May furnish such a happy *bit*.
 Bards too are hers, wont to recite
 Their own sweet lays by waxen
 light,
 Half in the salver's tangle drowned,
 While the *chasse-café* glides
 around;
 And such may hither secret stray
 To labor an extempore: 650
 Or sportsman with his boisterous
 hollo
 May here his wiser spaniel follow,
 Or stage-struck Juliet may pre-
 sume
 To choose this bower for tiring-
 room;
 And we alike must shun regard
 From painter, player, sportsman,
 bard.
 Insects that skim in fashion's sky,

Wasp, blue-bottle, or butterfly,
 Lucy, have all alarms for us, 659
 For all can hum and all can buzz.

III

But O, my Lucy, say how long
 We still must dread this trifling
 throng,
 And stoop to hide with coward art
 The genuine feelings of the heart!
 No parents thine whose just com-
 mand
 Should rule their child's obedient
 hand;
 Thy guardians with contending
 voice
 Press each his individual choice.
 And which is Lucy's? — Can it be
 That puny fop, trimmed capa-
 pie, 670
 Who loves in the saloon to show
 The arms that never knew a foe;
 Whose sabre trails along the
 ground,
 Whose legs in shapeless boots are
 drowned;
 A new Achilles, sure — the steel
 Fled from his breast to fence his
 heel;
 One, for the simple manly grace
 That wont to deck our martial
 race, 678
 Who comes in foreign trashery
 Of tinkling chain and spur,
 A walking haberdashery
 Of feathers, lace, and fur:
 In Rowley's antiquated phrase,
 Horse-milliner of modern days?

IV

Or is it he, the wordy youth,
 So early trained for states-
 man's part,
 Who talks of honor, faith and
 truth,
 As themes that he has got by
 heart;
 Whose ethics Chesterfield can
 teach,
 Whose logic is from Single-
 speech; 690

Who scorns the meanest thought
to vent
Save in the phrase of Parliament;
Who, in a tale of cat and mouse,
Calls 'order,' and 'divides the
house.'

Who 'craves permission to reply,'
Whose 'noble friend is in his eye;'
Whose loving tender some have
reckoned

A *motion* you should gladly
second?

V

What, neither? Can there be a
third,

To such resistless swains pre-
ferred?— 700

O why, my Lucy, turn aside
With that quick glance of injured
pride?

Forgive me, love, I cannot bear
That altered and resentful air.

Were all the wealth of Russel
mine

And all the rank of Howard's
line,

All would I give for leave to dry
That dewdrop trembling in thine
eye.

Think not I fear such fops can
wile

From Lucy more than careless
smile; 710

But yet if wealth and high de-
gree

Give gilded counters currency,
Must I not fear when rank and
birth

Stamp the pure ore of genuine
worth?

Nobles there are whose martial
fires

Rival the fame that raised their
sires,

And patriots, skilled through
storms of fate

To guide and guard the reeling
state.

Such, such there are.— If such
should come, 719

Arthur must tremble and be dumb,
Self-exiled seek some distant
shore,
And mourn till life and grief are
o'er.

VI

What sight, what signal of alarm,
That Lucy clings to Arthur's arm?
Or is it that the rugged way
Makes Beauty lean on lover's
stay?

O, no! for on the vale and brake
Nor sight nor sounds of danger
wake,

And this trim sward of velvet
green

Were carpet for the Fairy Queen.
That pressure slight was but to
tell 731

That Lucy loves her Arthur well,
And fain would banish from his
mind

Suspicious fear and doubt unkind.

VII

But wouldst thou bid the demons
fly

Like mist before the dawning
sky,

There is but one resistless spell—
Say, wilt thou guess or must I
tell?

'T were hard to name in minstrel
phrase 739

A landaulet and four blood-bays,
But bards agree this wizard band
Can but be bound in Northern
land.

'T is there—nay, draw not back
thy hand!—

'T is there this slender finger
round

Must golden amulet be bound,
Which, blessed with many a holy
prayer,

Can change to rapture lovers'
care,

And doubt and jealousy shall
die,

And fears give place to ecstasy.

VIII

Now, trust me, Lucy, all too long,
Has been thy lover's tale and
song. 751

O, why so silent, love, I pray?
Have I not spoke the livelong day?
And will not Lucy deign to say
One word her friend to bless?
I ask but one — a simple sound,
Within three little letters bound —
O, let the word be YES!

CANTO THIRD

INTRODUCTION

I

LONG loved, long wooed, and lately
won,
My life's best hope, and now mine
own!
Doth not this rude and Alpine glen
Recall our favorite haunts agen?
A wild resemblance we can trace,
Though reft of every softer grace,
As the rough warrior's brow may
bear
A likeness to a sister fair.
Full well advised our Highland
host
That this wild pass on foot be
crossed, 10
While round Ben-Cruach's mighty
base
Wheel the slow steeds and linger-
ing chase.
The keen old carle, with Scottish
pride
He praised his glen and mountains
wide;
An eye he bears for nature's face,
Ay, and for woman's lovely grace.
Even in such mean degree we find
The subtle Scot's observing mind;
For nor the chariot nor the train
Could gape of vulgar wonder gain,
But when old Allan would ex-
pound 21
Of Beal-na-paish the Celtic sound,
His bonnet doffed and bow applied

His legend to my bonny bride;
While Lucy blushed beneath his
eye,
Courteous and cautious, shrewd
and sly.

II

Enough of him. — Now, ere we
lose,
Plunged in the vale, the distant
views,
Turn thee, my love! look back
once more 29
To the blue lake's retiring shore.
On its smooth breast the shadows
seem

Like objects in a morning dream,
What time the slumberer is aware
He sleeps and all the vision's air:
Even so on yonder liquid lawn,
In hues of bright reflection drawn,
Distinct the shaggy mountains lie,
Distinct the rocks, distinct the sky;
The summer-clouds so plain we
note

That we might count each dappled
spot: 40

We gaze and we admire, yet know
The scene is all delusive show.
Such dreams of bliss would Arthur
draw

When first his Lucy's form he saw,
Yet sighed and sickened as he
drew,
Despairing they could e'er prove
true!

III

But, Lucy, turn thee now to view
Up the fair glen our destined
way:

The fairy path that we pursue, 49
Distinguished but by greener hue,
Winds round the purple brae,
While Alpine flowers of varied dye
For carpet serve or tapestry.
See how the little runnels leap
In threads of silver down the steep
To swell the brooklet's moan!
Seems that the Highland Naiad
grieves,

Fantastic while her crown she
weaves
Of rowan, birch, and alder leaves,
So lovely and so lone. 60
There's no illusion there; these
flowers,
That wailing brook, these lovely
bowers,
Are, Lucy, all our own;
And, since thine Arthur called thee
wife,
Such seems the prospect of his life,
A lovely path on-winding still
By gurgling brook and sloping hill.
'T is true that mortals cannot tell
What waits them in the distant
dell;
But be it hap or be it harm, 70
We tread the pathway arm in arm.

IV

And now, my Lucy, wot'st thou
why
I could thy bidding twice deny,
When twice you prayed I would
again
Resume the legendary strain
Of the bold knight of Triermaln?
At length yon peevish vow you
swore
That you would sue to me no more,
Until the minstrel fit drew near 79
And made me prize a listening ear.
But, loveliest, when thou first didst
pray
Continuance of the knightly lay,
Was it not on the happy day
That made thy hand mine own?
When, dazzled with mine ecstasy,
Naught past, or present, or to be,
Could I or think on, hear, or see,
Save, Lucy, thee alone!
A giddy draught my rapture was
As ever chemist's magic gas. 90

V

Again the summons I denied
In yon fair capital of Clyde:
My harp — or let me rather choose
The good old classic form — my
Muse —

For harp's an over-scuted
phrase,
Worn out by bards of modern
days —
My Muse, then — seldom will she
wake,
Save by dim wood and silent
lake;
She is the wild and rustic maid
Whose foot unsaddled loves to
tread 100
Where the soft greensward is in-
laid
With varied moss and thyme;
And, lest the simple lily-braid,
That coronets her temples fade,
She hides her still in greenwood
shade
To meditate her rhyme.

VI

And now she comes! The murmur
dear
Of the wild brook hath caught her
ear,
The glade hath won her eye;
She longs to join with each blithe
rill 110
That dances down the Highland
hill
Her blither melody.
And now my Lucy's way to cheer
She bids Ben-Cruach's echoes hear
How closed the tale my love
whilere
Loved for its chivalry.
List how she tells in notes of flame
'Child Roland to the dark tower
came!'

I

BEWCASTLE now must keep the
hold,
Speir-Adam's steeds must bide
in stall,
Of Hartley-burn the bowmen bold
Must only shoot from battled
wall;
And Liddesdale may buckle spur,

And Teviot now may belt the
brand,
Tarras and Ewes keep nightly stir,
And Eskdale foray Cumberland.
Of wasted fields and plundered
flocks
The Borderers bootless may
complain; 10
They lack the sword of brave De
Vaux,
There comes no aid from Trier-
main.
That lord on high adventure bound
Had wandered forth alone,
And day and night keeps watchful
round
In the valley of Saint John.

II

When first began his vigil bold
The moon twelve summer nights
was old
And shone both fair and full;
High in the vault of cloudless
blue, 20
O'er streamlet, dale, and rock, she
threw
Her light composed and cool.
Stretched on the brown hill's
heathy breast,
Sir Roland eyed the vale;
Chief where, distinguished from
the rest,
Those clustering rocks upreared
their crest,
The dwelling of the fair distressed,
As told gray Lyulph's tale.
Thus as he lay, the lamp of night
Was quivering on his armor
bright 30
In beams that rose and fell,
And danced upon his buckler's
boss
That lay beside him on the moss
As on a crystal well.

III

Ever he watched and oft he
deemed,
While on the mound the moonlight
streamed,

It altered to his eyes;
Fain would he hope the rocks 'gan
change
To buttressed walls their shape-
less range,
Fain think by transmutation
strange 40
He saw gray turrets rise.
But scarce his heart with hope
throbbed high
Before the wild illusions fly
Which fancy had conceived,
Abetted by an anxious eye
That longed to be deceived.
It was a fond deception all,
Such as in solitary hall
Beguiles the musing eye 49
When, gazing on the sinking fire,
Bulwark, and battlement, and
spire
In the red gulf we spy.
For, seen by moon of middle night,
Or by the blaze of noontide bright,
Or by the dawn of morning light,
Or evening's western flame,
In every tide, at every hour,
In mist, in sunshine, and in shower,
The rocks remained the same.

IV

Oft has he traced the charmed
mound, 60
Oft climbed its crest or paced it
round,
Yet nothing might explore,
Save that the crags so rudely piled,
At distance seen, resemblance
wild
To a rough fortress bore.
Yet still his watch the warrior
keeps,
Feeds hard and spare, and seldom
sleeps,
And drinks but of the well;
Ever by day he walks the hill, 69
And when the evening gale is chill
He seeks a rocky cell,
Like hermit poor to bid his bead,
And tell his Ave and his Creed,
Invoking every saint at need
For aid to burst his spell.

V

And now the moon her orb has hid
And dwindled to a silver thread,
Dim seen in middle heaven,
While o'er its curve careering fast
Before the fury of the blast 80

The midnight clouds are driven.
The brooklet raved, for on the hills
The upland showers had swoln the
rills

And down the torrents came ;
Muttered the distant thunder
dread,
And frequent o'er the vale was
spread

A sheet of lightning flame.
De Vaux within his mountain
cave —

No human step the storm durst
brave —

To moody meditation gave 90

Each faculty of soul,
Till, lulled by distant torrent sound
And the sad winds that whistled
round,

Upon his thoughts in musing
drowned

A broken slumber stole.

VI

'T was then was heard a heavy
sound —

Sound, strange and fearful there
to hear,

'Mongst desert hills where leagues
around

Dwelt but the gorcock and the
deer. 99

As, starting from his couch of fern,
Again he heard in clangor stern

That deep and solemn swell,
Twelve times in measured tone it
spoke,

Like some proud minster's pealing
clock

Or city's larum-bell.

What thought was Roland's first
when fell

In that deep wilderness the knell
Upon his startled ear ?

To slander warrior were I loath,

Yet must I hold my minstrel
troth — 110

It was a thought of fear.

VII

But lively was the mingled thrill
That chased that momentary chill,
For Love's keen wish was there,
And eager Hope, and Valor high,
And the proud glow of Chivalry
That burned to do and dare.

Forth from the cave the warrior
rushed,

Long ere the mountain-voice was
hushed

That answered to the knell ; 120
For long and far the unwonted
sound,

Eddying in echoes round and
round,

Was tossed from fell to fell ;
And Glaramara answer flung,
And Grisdale - pike responsive
rung,

And Legbert heights their echoes
swung

As far as Derwent's dell.

VIII

Forth upon trackless darkness
gazed

The knight, bedeaftened and
amazed,

Till all was hushed and still, 130
Save the swoln torrent's sullen
roar,

And the night-blast that wildly
bore

Its course along the hill.

Then on the northern sky there
came

A light as of reflected flame,
And over Legbert-head,
As if by magic art controlled,
A mighty meteor slowly rolled

Its orb of fiery red ;
Thou wouldst have thought some
demon dire 140

Came mounted on that car of fire
To do his errand dread.

Far on the sloping valley's course,

On thicket, rock, and torrent
 hoarse,
 Shingle and Scrae, and Fell and
 Force,
 A dusky light arose:
 Displayed, yet altered was the
 scene;
 Dark rock, and brook of silver
 sheen,
 Even the gay thicket's summer
 green,
 In bloody tincture glows. 150

IX

De Vaux had marked the sun-
 beams set
 At eve upon the coronet
 Of that enchanted mound,
 And seen but crags at random
 flung,
 That, o'er the brawling torrent
 hung,
 In desolation frowned.
 What sees he by that meteor's
 lour?—
 A bannered castle, keep, and tower
 Return the lurid gleam,
 With battled walls and buttress
 fast, 160
 And barbican and ballium vast,
 And airy flanking towers that cast
 Their shadows on the stream.
 'Tis no deceit! distinctly clear
 Crenell and parapet appear,
 While o'er the pile that meteor
 drear
 Makes momentary pause;
 Then forth its solemn path it drew,
 And fainter yet and fainter grew
 Those gloomy towers upon the
 view, 170
 As its wild light withdraws.

X

Forth from the cave did Roland
 rush,
 O'er crag and stream, through
 brier and bush;
 Yet far he had not sped
 Ere sunk was that portentous light
 Behind the hills and utter night

Was on the valley spread.
 He paused perforce and blew his
 horn,
 And, on the mountain-echoes
 borne, 179
 Was heard an answering sound,
 A wild and lonely trumpet note,—
 In middle air it seemed to float
 High o'er the battled mound;
 And sounds were heard as when a
 guard
 Of some proud castle, holding
 ward,
 Pace forth their nightly round.
 The valiant Knight of Triermain
 Rung forth his challenge-blast
 again,
 But answer came there none;
 And mid the mingled wind and
 rain 190
 Darkling he sought the vale in
 vain,
 Until the dawning shone;
 And when it dawned that won-
 drous sight
 Distinctly seen by meteor light,
 It all had passed away!
 And that enchanted mount once
 more
 A pile of granite fragments bore
 As at the close of day.

XI

Steeled for the deed, De Vaux's
 heart
 Scorned from his vent'rous quest
 to part, 200
 He walks the vale once more;
 But only sees by night or day
 That shattered pile of rocks so
 gray,
 Hears but the torrent's roar:
 Till when, through hills of azure
 borne,
 The moon renewed her silver horn,
 Just at the time her waning ray
 Had faded in the dawning day,
 A summer mist arose; 209
 Adown the vale the vapors float,
 And cloudy undulations moat
 That tufted mound of mystic note,

As round its base they close.
 And higher now the fleecy tide
 Ascends its stern and shaggy side,
 Until the airy billows hide
 The rock's majestic isle ;
 It seemed a veil of filmy lawn,
 By some fantastic fairy drawn
 Around enchanted pile. 220

XII

The breeze came softly down the
 brook,
 And, sighing as it blew,
 The veil of silver mist it shook
 And to De Vaux's eager look
 Renewed that wondrous view.
 For, though the loitering vapor
 braved

The gentle breeze, yet oft it waved
 Its mantle's dewy fold ;
 And still when shook that filmy
 screen

Were towers and bastions dimly
 seen, 230

And Gothic battlements between
 Their gloomy length unrolled.
 Speed, speed, De Vaux, ere on
 thine eye

Once more the fleeting vision
 die ! —

The gallant knight 'gan speed
 As prompt and light as, when the
 hound

Is opening and the horn is wound,
 Careers the hunter's steed.

Down the steep dell his course
 amain

Hath rivalled archer's shaft ; 240
 But ere the mound he could attain
 The rocks their shapeless form re-
 gain,

And, mocking loud his labor vain,
 The mountain spirits laughed.
 Far up the echoing dell was borne
 Their wild unearthly shout of
 scorn.

XIII

Wroth waxed the warrior. — ' Am
 I then
 Fooled by the enemies of men,

Like a poor hind whose homeward
 way

Is haunted by malicious fay ? 250
 Is Triermain become your taunt,
 De Vaux your scorn ? False fiends,
 avaunt !'

A weighty curtal-axe he bare ;
 The baleful blade so bright and
 square,

And the tough shaft of heben
 wood,

Were oft in Scottish gore imbrued.
 Backward his stately form he
 drew,

And at the rocks the weapon
 threw

Just where one crag's projected
 crest

Hung proudly balanced o'er the
 rest. 260

Hurled with main force the wea-
 pon's shock

Rent a huge fragment of the rock.
 If by mere strength, 't were hard
 to tell,

Or if the blow dissolved some spell,
 But down the headlong ruin came
 With cloud of dust and flash of
 flame.

Down bank, o'er bush, its course
 was borne,

Crushed lay the copse, the earth
 was torn,

Till staid at length the ruin dread
 Cumbered the torrent's rocky bed,
 And bade the waters' high-swoln
 tide 271

Seek other passage for its pride.

XIV

When ceased that thunder Trier-
 main

Surveyed the mound's rude front
 again ;

And lo ! the ruin had laid bare,
 Hewn in the stone, a winding stair
 Whose mossed and fractured steps
 might lend

The means the summit to ascend ;
 And by whose aid the brave De
 Vaux

Began to scale these magic rocks,
 And soon a platform won 281
 Where, the wild witchery to close,
 Within three lances' length arose
 The Castle of Saint John!
 No misty phantom of the air,
 No meteor-blazoned show was
 there;
 In morning splendor full and fair
 The massive fortress shone.

XV

Embattled high and proudly towered,
 Shaded by ponderous flankers,
 lowered 290
 The portal's gloomy way.
 Though for six hundred years and
 more
 Its strength had brooked the tempest's roar,
 The scutcheoned emblems which
 it bore
 Had suffered no decay:
 But from the eastern battlement
 A turret had made sheer descent,
 And, down in recent ruin rent,
 In the mid torrent lay.
 Else, o'er the castle's brow sublime, 300
 Insults of violence or of time
 Unfelt had passed away.
 In shapeless characters of yore,
 The gate this stern inscription bore:

XVI

INSCRIPTION

'Patience waits the destined day,
 Strength can clear the cumbered
 way.
 Warrior, who hast waited long,
 Firm of soul, of sinew strong,
 It is given to thee to gaze
 On the pile of ancient days. 310
 Never mortal builder's hand
 This enduring fabric planned;
 Sign and sigil, word of power,
 From the earth raised keep and
 tower.

View it o'er and pace it round,
 Rampart, turret, battled mound.
 Dare no more! To cross the
 gate
 Were to tamper with thy fate;
 Strength and fortitude were vain,
 View it o'er — and turn again.' 320

XVII

'That would I,' said the warrior
 bold,
 'If that my frame were bent and
 old,
 And my thin blood dropped slow
 and cold
 As icicle in thaw;
 But while my heart can feel it
 dance
 Blithe as the sparkling wine of
 France,
 And this good arm wields sword
 or lance,
 I mock these words of awe!'
 He said; the wicket felt the sway
 Of his strong hand and straight
 gave way, 330
 And with rude crash and jarring
 bray
 The rusty bolts withdraw;
 But o'er the threshold as he strode
 And forward took the vaulted
 road,
 An unseen arm with force amain
 The ponderous gate flung close
 again,
 And rusted bolt and bar
 Spontaneous took their place once
 more
 While the deep arch with sullen
 roar
 Returned their surly jar. 340
 'Now closed is the gin and the
 prey within,
 By the Rood of Lanercost!
 But he that would win the war-
 wolf's skin
 May rue him of his boast.'
 Thus muttering on the warrior
 went
 By dubious light down steep descent.

XVIII

Unbarred, unlocked, unwatched, a
 port
 Led to the castle's outer court :
 There the main fortress, broad
 and tall,
 Spread its long range of bower
 and hall 350
 And towers of varied size,
 Wrought with each ornament ex-
 treme
 That Gothic art in wildest dream
 Of fancy could devise ;
 But full between the warrior's
 way
 And the main portal arch there lay
 An inner moat ;
 Nor bridge nor boat
 Affords De Vaux the means to
 cross
 The clear, profound, and silent
 fosse. 360
 His arms aside in haste he flings,
 Cuirass of steel and hauberk rings,
 And down falls helm and down the
 shield,
 Rough with the dints of many a
 field.
 Fair was his manly form and fair
 His keen dark eye and close curled
 hair,
 When all unarmed save that the
 brand
 Of well-proved metal graced his
 hand,
 With naught to fence his daunt-
 less breast 369
 But the close gipon's under-vest,
 Whose sullied buff the sable stains
 Of hauberk and of mail retains, —
 Roland De Vaux upon the brim
 Of the broad moat stood prompt
 to swim.

XIX

Accoutred thus he dared the tide,
 And soon he reached the farther
 side
 And entered soon the hold,
 And paced a hall whose walls so
 wide

Were blazoned all with feats of
 pride

By warriors done of old. 380
 In middle lists they countered here
 While trumpets seemed to blow ;
 And there in den or desert drear
 They quelled gigantic foe,
 Braved the fierce griffon in his ire,
 Or faced the dragon's breath of
 fire.

Strange in their arms and strange
 in face,

Heroes they seemed of ancient
 race,

Whose deeds of arms and race
 and name,

Forgotten long by later fame, 390
 Were here depicted to appall

Those of an age degenerate
 Whose bold intrusion braved their
 fate

In this enchanted hall.
 For some short space the ventur-
 ous knight

With these high marvels fed his
 sight,

Then sought the chamber's upper
 end

Where three broad easy steps as-
 cend

To an arched portal door,
 In whose broad folding leaves of
 state 400

Was framed a wicket window-
 grate ;

And ere he ventured more,
 The gallant knight took earnest
 view

The grated wicket - window
 through.

XX

O, for his arms ! Of martial weed
 Had never mortal knight such
 need ! —

He spied a stately gallery ; all
 Of snow-white marble was the
 wall,

The vaulting, and the floor ; 409
 And, contrast strange ! on either
 hand

There stood arrayed in sable band
 Four maids whom Afric bore ;
 And each a Lybian tiger led,
 Held by as bright and frail a
 thread

As Lucy's golden hair,
 For the leash that bound these
 monsters dread

Was but of gossamer.
 Each maiden's short barbaric
 vest

Left all unclosed the knee and
 breast

And limbs of shapely jet ; 420
 White was their vest and turban's
 fold,

On arms and ankles rings of gold
 In savage pomp were set ;
 A quiver on their shoulders lay,
 And in their hand an assagay.
 Such and so silent stood they
 there

That Roland wellnigh hoped
 He saw a band of statues rare,
 Stationed the gazer's soul to scare ;

But when the wicket oped 430
 Each grisly beast 'gan upward
 draw,

Rolled his grim eye, and spread
 his claw,

Scented the air, and licked his
 jaw :

While these weird maids in Moor-
 ish tongue

A wild and dismal warning sung.

XXI

'Rash adventurer, bear thee back !
 Dread the spell of Dahomay !
 Fear the race of Zaharak ;
 Daughters of the burning day !

'When the whirlwind's gusts are
 wheeling, 440
 Ours it is the dance to braid ;
 Zarah's sands in pillars reeling
 Join the measure that we tread,
 When the Moon has donned her
 cloak

And the stars are red to see,

Shrill when pipes the sad Siroc,
 Music meet for such as we.

'Where the shattered columns lie,
 Showing Carthage once had
 been,

If the wandering Santon's eye 450
 Our mysterious rites hath seen, —
 Oft he cons the prayer of death,
 To the nations preaches doom,
 "Azrael's brand hath left the
 sheath !

Moslems, think upon the tomb !"

'Ours the scorpion, ours the snake,
 Ours the hydra of the fen,
 Ours the tiger of the brake,
 All that plague the sons of men.
 Ours the tempest's midnight
 wrack, 460

Pestilence that wastes by day —
 Dread the race of Zaharak !
 Fear the spell of Dahomay !'

XXII

Uncouth and strange the accents
 shrill

Rung those vaulted roofs among,
 Long it was ere faint and still
 Died the far-resounding song.
 While yet the distant echoes roll,
 The warrior communed with his
 soul.

'When first I took this ventur-
 ous quest, 470

I swore upon the rood
 Neither to stop nor turn nor rest,
 For evil or for good.
 My forward path too well I ween
 Lies yonder fearful ranks be-
 tween ;

For man unarmed 'tis bootless
 hope

With tigers and with fiends to
 cope —

Yet, if I turn, what waits me there
 Save famine dire and fell de-
 spair ? —

Other conclusion let me try, 480
 Since, choose howe'er I list, I die.

Forward lies faith and knightly
fame;
Behind are perjury and shame.
In life or death I hold my word!
With that he drew his trusty
sword,
Caught down a banner from the
wall,
And entered thus the fearful hall.

XXIII

On high each wayward maiden
threw
Her swarthy arm with wild hal-
loo! 489
On either side a tiger sprung —
Against the leftward foe he flung
The ready banner to engage
With tangling folds the brutal
rage;
The right-hand monster in mid air
He struck so fiercely and so fair
Through gullet and through spinal
bone
The trenchant blade hath sheerly
gone.
His grisly brethren ramped and
yelled,
But the slight leash their rage
withheld,
Whilst 'twixt their ranks the dan-
gerous road 500
Firmly though swift the champion
strode.
Safe to the gallery's bound he
drew,
Safe passed an open portal
through;
And when against pursuit he flung
The gate, judge if the echoes rung!
Onward his daring course he bore,
While, mixed with dying growl
and roar,
Wild jubilee and loud hurra
Pursued him on his venturous
way.

XXIV

'Hurra, hurra! Our watch is
done! 510
We hail once more the tropic sun.

Pallid beams of northern day,
Farewell, farewell! Hurra, hurra!

'Five hundred years o'er this cold
glen
Hath the pale sun come round
agen;
Foot of man till now hath ne'er
Dared to cross the Hall of Fear.

'Warrior! thou whose dauntless
heart
Gives us from our ward to part,
Be as strong in future trial 520
Where resistance is denial.

'Now for Afric's glowing sky,
Zwenga wide and Atlas high,
Zaharak and Dahomay! —
Mount the winds! Hurra, hurra!'

XXV

The wizard song at distance died,
As if in ether borne astray,
While through waste halls and
chambers wide
The knight pursued his steady
way
Till to a lofty dome he came 530
That flashed with such a brilliant
flame
As if the wealth of all the world
Were there in rich confusion
hurled.
For here the gold in sandy heaps
With duller earth incorporate
sleeps;
Was there in ingots piled, and
there
Coined badge of empery it bare;
Yonder, huge bars of silver lay,
Dimmed by the diamond's neigh-
boring ray,
Like the pale moon in morning
day; 540
And in the midst four maidens
stand,
The daughters of some distant
land.
Their hue was of the dark-red dye
That fringes oft a thunder sky;

Their hands palmetto baskets
bare,
And cotton fillets bound their hair;
Slim was their form, their mien
was shy,
To earth they bent the humbled
eye,
Folded their arms, and suppliant
kneeled,
And thus their proffered gifts re-
vealed. 550

XXVI

CHORUS

'See the treasures Merlin piled,
Portion meet for Arthur's child.
Bathe in Wealth's unbounded
stream,
Wealth that Avarice ne'er could
dream!'

FIRST MAIDEN

'See these clots of virgin gold!
Severed from the sparry mould,
Nature's mystic alchemy
In the mine thus bade them lie;
And their orient smile can win
Kings to stoop and saints to sin.'

SECOND MAIDEN

'See these pearls that long have
slept; 561
These were tears by Naiads wept
For the loss of Marinel.
Tritons in the silver shell
Treasured them till hard and
white
As the teeth of Amphitrite.'

THIRD MAIDEN

'Does a livelier hue delight?
Here are rubies blazing bright,
Here the emerald's fairy green,
And the topaz glows between;
Here their varied hues unite
In the changeful chrysolite.' 572

FOURTH MAIDEN

'Leave these gems of poorer shine,
Leave them all and look on mine!

While their glories I expand
Shade thine eyebrows with thy
hand.
Mid-day sun and diamond's blaze
Blind the rash beholder's gaze.'

CHORUS

'Warrior, seize the splendid store;
Would 'twere all our mountains
bore! 580
We should ne'er in future story
Read, Peru, thy perished glory!'

XXVII

Calmly and unconcerned the
knight
Waved aside the treasures
bright—
'Gentle Maidens, rise, I pray!
Bar not thus my destined way.
Let these boasted brilliant toys
Braid the hair of girls and boys!
Bid your streams of gold expand
O'er proud London's thirsty land.
De Vaux of wealth saw never
need 591
Save to purvey him arms and
steed,
And all the ore he deigned to
hoard
Inlays his helm and hilts his
sword.'
Thus gently parting from their
hold,
He left unmoved the dome of gold.

XXVIII

And now the morning sun was
high,
De Vaux was weary, faint, and
dry;
When, lo! a plashing sound he
hears, 599
A glad some signal that he nears
Some frolic water-run:
And soon he reached a courtyard
square
Where, dancing in the sultry air,
Tossed high aloft a fountain fair
Was sparkling in the sun.
On right and left a fair arcade

In long perspective view displayed
Alleys and bowers for sun or
shade :

But full in front a door,
Low-browed and dark, seemed as
it led 610
To the lone dwelling of the dead
Whose memory was no more.

XXIX

Here stopped De Vaux an instant's
space
To bathe his parched lips and face,
And marked with well-pleased
eye,
Refracted on the fountain stream,
In rainbow hues the dazzling beam
Of that gay summer sky.
His senses felt a mild control,
Like that which lulls the weary
soul, 620

From contemplation high
Relaxing, when the ear receives
The music that the greenwood
leaves
Make to the breezes' sigh.

XXX

And oft in such a dreamy mood
The half-shut eye can frame
Fair apparitions in the wood,
As if the Nymphs of field and
flood

In gay procession came. 629
Are these of such fantastic mould,
Seen distant down the fair ar-
cade,
These maids enlinked in sister-
fold,

Who, late at bashful distance
staid,
Now tripping from the green-
wood shade,
Nearer the musing champion draw
And in a pause of seeming awe
Again stand doubtful now? —
Ah, that sly pause of witching
powers!

That seems to say, 'To please be
ours,
Be yours to tell us how.' 640

Their hue was of the golden glow
That suns of Candahar bestow,
O'er which in slight suffusion flows
A frequent tinge of paly rose;
Their limbs were fashioned fair
and free

In nature's justest symmetry;
And, wreathed with flowers, with
odors graced,

Their raven ringlets reached the
waist: 648

In eastern pomp its gilding pale
The henna lent each shapely nail,
And the dark sumah gave the eye
More liquid and more lustrous dye.
The spotless veil of misty lawn,
In studied disarrangement drawn
The form and bosom o'er,
To win the eye or tempt the touch
For modesty showed all too
much —

Too much — yet promised more.

XXXI

'Gentle knight, awhile delay,'
Thus they sung, 'thy toilsome
way, 660

While we pay the duty due
To our Master and to you.
Over Avarice, over Fear,
Love triumphant led thee here;
Warrior, list to us, for we
Are slaves to Love, are friends to
thee.

Though no treasured gems have
we

To proffer on the bended knee,
Though we boast nor arm nor
heart

For the assagay or dart, 670
Swains allow each simple girl
Ruby lip and teeth of pearl;
Or, if dangers more you prize,
Flatterers find them in our eyes.

'Stay, then, gentle warrior, stay,
Rest till evening steal on day;
Stay, O, stay! — in yonder bowers
We will braid thy locks with flow-
ers, 678
Spread the feast and fill the wine,

Charm thy ear with sounds divine,
Weave our dances till delight 681
Yield to languor, day to night.
Then shall she you most approve
Sing the lays that best you love,
Soft thy mossy couch shall spread,
Watch thy pillow, prop thy head,
Till the weary night be o'er —
Gentle warrior, wouldst thou more?
Wouldst thou more, fair warrior, —
she 689
Is slave to Love and slave to thee.'

XXXII

O, do not hold it for a crime
In the bold hero of my rhyme,
For Stoic look
And meet rebuke
He lacked the heart or time;
As round the band of sirens trip,
He kissed one damsel's laughing
lip,
And pressed another's proffered
hand,
Spoke to them all in accents bland,
But broke their magic circle
through; 700
'Kind maids,' he said, 'adieu,
adieu!
My fate, my fortune, forward lies.'
He said and vanished from their
eyes;
But, as he dared that darksome
way,
Still heard behind their lovely lay:
'Fair Flower of Courtesy, depart!
Go where the feelings of the heart
With the warm pulse in concord
move;
Go where Virtue sanctions Love!'

XXXIII

Downward De Vaux through
darksome ways 710
And ruined vaults has gone,
Till issue from their wildered
maze
Or safe retreat seemed none,
And e'en the dismal path he
strays
Grew worse as he went on.

For cheerful sun, for living air,
Foul vapors rise and mine-fires
glare,
Whose fearful light the dangers
showed
That dogged him on that dreadful
road. 719
Deep pits and lakes of waters dun
They showed, but showed not how
to shun.
These scenes of desolate despair,
These smothering clouds of poi-
soned air,
How gladly had De Vaux ex-
changed,
Though 't were to face yon tigers
ranged!

Nay, soothful bards have said,
So perilous his state seemed now
He wished him under arbor bough
With Asia's willing maid.
When, joyful sound! at distance
near 730
A trumpet flourished loud and clear,
And as it ceased a lofty lay
Seemed thus to chide his lagging
way.

XXXIV

'Son of Honor, theme of story,
Think on the reward before ye!
Danger, darkness, toil despise;
'T is Ambition bids thee rise.
'He that would her heights ascend,
Many a weary step must wend;
Hand and foot and knee he tries;
Thus Ambition's minions rise. 741
'Lag not now, though rough the
way,
Fortune's mood brooks no delay;
Grasp the boon that's spread be-
fore ye,
Monarch's power and Conqueror's
glory!'
It ceased. Advancing on the
sound,
A steep ascent the wanderer found,
And then a turret stair:

Nor climbed he far its steepy
round

Till fresher blew the air, 750
And next a welcome glimpse was
given

That cheered him with the light
of heaven.

At length his toil had won
A lofty hall with trophies dressed,
Where as to greet imperial guest
Four maidens stood whose crim-
son vest

Was bound with golden zone.

XXXV

Of Europe seemed the damsels all;
The first a nymph of lively Gaul
Whose easy step and laughing eye
Her borrowed air of awe belie;

The next a maid of Spain, 762
Dark-eyed, dark-haired, sedate yet
bold;

White ivory skin and tress of gold
Her shy and bashful comrade told
For daughter of Almaine.

These maidens bore a royal robe,
With crown, with sceptre, and
with globe,

Emblems of empery;
The fourth a space behind them
stood, 770

And leant upon a harp in mood
Of minstrel ecstasy.

Of merry England she, in dress
Like ancient British Druidess,
Her hair an azure fillet bound,
Her graceful vesture swept the
ground,

And in her hand displayed
A crown did that fourth maiden
hold,

But unadorned with gems and
gold,

Of glossy laurel made. 780

XXXVI

At once to brave De Vaux knelt
down

These foremost maidens three,
And proffered sceptre, robe, and
crown,

Liegedom and seignorie
O'er many a region wide and fair,
Destined, they said, for Arthur's
heir;

But homage would he none:—
'Rather,' he said, 'De Vaux would
ride,

A warden of the Border-side
In plate and mail than, robed in
pride, 790

A monarch's empire own;
Rather, far rather, would he be
A free-born knight of England free
Than sit on despot's throne.'

So passed he on, when that fourth
maid,

As starting from a trance,
Upon the harp her finger laid;
Her magic touch the chords
obeyed,

Their soul awaked at once! 799

SONG OF THE FOURTH MAIDEN

'Quake to your foundations deep,
Stately towers, and bannered keep,
Bid your vaulted echoes moan,
As the dreaded step they own.

'Fiends, that wait on Merlin's
spell,

Hear the foot-fall! mark it well!
Spread your dusky wings abroad,
Boune ye for your homeward road!

'It is HIS, the first who e'er
Dared the dismal Hall of Fear;
HIS, who hath the snares defied
Spread by Pleasure, Wealth, and
Pride. 811

'Quake to your foundations deep,
Bastion huge, and turret steep!
Tremble, keep! and totter, tower!
This is Gyneth's waking hour.'

XXXVII

Thus while she sung the venturous
knight
Has reached a bower where milder
light

Through crimson curtains fell;
Such softened shade the hill re-
ceives,

Her purple veil when twilight
leaves 820

Upon its western swell.

That bower, the gazer to bewitch,
Had wondrous store of rare and
rich

As e'er was seen with eye;
For there by magic skill, I wis,
Form of each thing that living is
Was limned in proper dye.

All seemed to sleep—the timid
hare

On form, the stag upon his lair,
The eagle in her eyrie fair 830

Between the earth and sky,
But what of pictured rich and
rare

Could win De Vaux's eye-glance,
where,

Deep slumbering in the fatal chair,
He saw King Arthur's child!

Doubt and anger and dismay
From her brow had passed away,
Forgot was that fell tourney-day,

For as she slept she smiled:
It seemed that the repentant Seer
Her sleep of many a hundred year
With gentle dreams beguiled. 842

XXXVIII

That form of maiden loveliness,
'Twixt childhood and 'twixt
youth,

That ivory chair, that sylvan dress,
The arms and ankles bare, express
Of Lyulph's tale the truth.

Still upon her garment's hem
Vanoc's blood made purple gem,
And the warder of command 850
Cumbered still her sleeping hand;
Still her dark locks dishevelled
flow

From net of pearl o'er breast of
snow;

And so fair the slumberer seems
That De Vaux impeached his
dreams,

Vapid all and void of might,
Hiding half her charms from sight.
Motionless awhile he stands,
Folds his arms and clasps his
hands,

Trembling in his fitful joy, 860
Doubtful how he should destroy

Long-enduring spell;
Doubtful too, when slowly rise
Dark-fringed lids of Gyneth's eyes,
What these eyes shall tell. —

'Saint George! Saint Mary! can
it be

That they will kindly look on
me!'

XXXIX

Gently, lo! the warrior kneels,
Soft that lovely hand he steals,
Soft to kiss and soft to clasp — 870
But the warder leaves her grasp;
Lightning flashes, rolls the thun-
der!

Gyneth startles from her sleep,
Totters tower, and trembles keep,
Burst the castle-walls asunder!
Fierce and frequent were the
shocks, —

Melt the magic halls away; —
But beneath their mystic rocks,
In the arms of bold De Vaux
Safe the princess lay; 880

Safe and free from magic power,
Blushing like the rose's flower
Opening to the day;

And round the champion's brows
were bound

The crown that Druidess had
wound

Of the green laurel-bay.
And this was what remained of
all

The wealth of each enchanted
hall,

The Garland and the Dame:
But where should warrior seek
the meed 890

Due to high worth for daring
deed

Except from LOVE and FAME!

CONCLUSION

I

My Lucy, when the maid is won
The minstrel's task, thou know'st,
is done;

And to require of bard
That to his dregs the tale should
run

Were ordinance too hard.
Our lovers, briefly be it said,
Wedded as lovers wont to wed,
When tale or play is o'er;
Lived long and blest, loved fond
and true,

And saw a numerous race renew 10
The honors that they bore.
Know too that when a pilgrim
strays

In morning mist or evening maze
Along the mountain lone,
That fairy fortress often mocks
His gaze upon the castled rocks

Of the valley of Saint John;
But never man since brave De
Vaux

The charmed portal won.
'T is now a vain illusive show 20
That melts whene'er the sunbeams
glow,

Or the fresh breeze hath blown.

II

But see, my love, where far below
Our lingering wheels are moving
slow,

The whiles, up-gazing still,

Our menials eye our steepy way,
Marvelling perchance what whim
can stay

Our steps when eve is sinking
gray

On this gigantic hill.
So think the vulgar — Life and
time 30

Ring all their joys in one dull
chime

Of luxury and ease;
And O, beside these simple knaves,
How many better born are slaves
To such coarse joys as these,
Dead to the nobler sense that
glows

When nature's grander scenes un-
close!

But, Lucy, we will love them yet,
The mountain's misty coronet,

The greenwood and the wold; 40
And love the more that of their
maze

Adventure high of other days
By ancient bards is told,
Bringing perchance, like my poor
tale,

Some moral truth in fiction's veil:
Nor love them less that o'er the
hill

The evening breeze as now comes
chill; —

My love shall wrap her warm,
And, fearless of the slippery way
While safe she trips the heathy
brae, 50

Shall hang on Arthur's arm.

THE LORD OF THE ISLES

A POEM IN SIX CANTOS

ADVERTISEMENT

THE Scene of this Poem lies, at first, in the Castle of Artornish, on the coast of Argyleshire ; and, afterwards, in the Islands of Skye and Arran, and upon the coast of Ayrshire. Finally, it is laid near Stirling. The story opens in the spring of the year 1307, when Bruce, who had been driven out of Scotland by the English, and the Barons who adhered to that foreign interest, returned from the Island of Ràchraon on the coast of Ireland, again to assert his claims to the Scottish crown. Many of the personages and incidents introduced are of historical celebrity. The authorities used are chiefly those of the venerable Lord Hailes, as well entitled to be called the restorer of Scottish history, as Bruce the restorer of Scottish Monarchy ; and of Archdeacon Barbour ; a correct edition of whose Metrical History of Robert Bruce will soon, I trust, appear, under the care of my learned friend, the Rev. Dr. Jamieson.

ABBOTSFORD, 10th December, 1814.

CANTO FIRST

AUTUMN departs — but still his mantle's fold
 Rests on the groves of noble Somerville,
 Beneath a shroud of russet drooped with gold
 Tweed and his tributaries mingle still ;
 Hoarser the wind and deeper sounds the rill,
 Yet lingering notes of sylvan music swell,
 The deep-toned cushat and the redbreast shrill ;
 And yet some tints of summer splendor tell
 When the broad sun sinks down on Ettrick's western fell.

Autumn departs — from Gala's fields no more 10
 Come rural sounds our kindred banks to cheer ;
 Blent with the stream and gale that wafts it o'er,
 No more the distant reaper's mirth we hear.
 The last blithe shout hath died upon our ear,
 And harvest-home hath hushed the clanging wain,
 On the waste hill no forms of life appear,
 Save where, sad laggard of the autumnal train,
 Some age-struck wanderer gleans few ears of scattered grain.

Deem'st thou these saddened scenes have pleasure still,
 Lov'st thou through Autumn's fading realms to stray, 20
 To see the heath-flower withered on the hill,
 To listen to the woods' expiring lay,
 To note the red leaf shivering on the spray,
 To mark the last bright tints the mountain stain,

On the waste fields to trace the gleaner's way,
 And moralize on mortal joy and pain? —
 O, if such scenes thou lov'st, scorn not the minstrel strain!

No! do not scorn, although its hoarser note
 Scarce with the cushat's homely song can vie,
 Though faint its beauties as the tints remote 30
 That gleam through mist in autumn's evening sky
 And few as leaves that tremble, sear and dry,
 When wild November hath his bugle wound;
 Nor mock my toil — a lonely gleaner I
 Through fields time-wasted, on sad inquest bound
 Where happier bards of yore have richer harvest found.

So shalt thou list, and haply not unmoved,
 To a wild tale of Albyn's warrior day;
 In distant lands, by the rough West reprov'd,
 Still live some relics of the ancient lay. 40
 For, when on Coolin's hills the lights decay,
 With such the Seer of Skye the eve beguiles;
 'T is known amid the pathless wastes of Reay,
 In Harries known and in Iona's piles,
 Where rest from mortal coil the Mighty of the Isles.

I

'WAKE, Maid of Lorn!' the min-
 strels sung. —
 Thy rugged halls, Artornish, rung,
 And the dark seas thy towers that
 lave
 Heaved on the beach a softer
 wave, 49
 As mid the tuneful choir to keep
 The diapason of the deep.
 Lulled were the winds on Innin-
 more
 And green Loch-Alline's woodland
 shore,
 As if wild woods and waves had
 pleasure
 In listing to the lovely measure.
 And ne'er to symphony more sweet
 Gave mountain echoes answer
 meet
 Since, met from mainland and from
 isle,
 Ross, Arran, Islay, and Argyle,
 Each minstrel's tributary lay 60
 Paid homage to the festal day.
 Dull and dishonored were the
 bard,

Worthless of guerdon and regard,
 Deaf to the hope of minstrel fame,
 Or lady's smiles, his noblest aim,
 Who on that morn's resistless
 call
 Was silent in Artornish hall.

II

'Wake, Maid of Lorn!' — 't was
 thus they sung,
 And yet more proud the descant
 rung,
 'Wake, Maid of Lorn! high right
 is ours 70
 To charm dull sleep from Beauty's
 bowers:
 Earth, ocean, air, have naught so
 shy
 But owns the power of minstrelsy.
 In Lettermore the timid deer
 Will pause the harp's wild chime
 to hear;
 Rude Heiskar's seal through
 surges dark
 Will long pursue the minstrel's
 bark;
 To list his notes the eagle proud

Will poise him on Ben-Cailliach's
cloud;
Then let not maiden's ear dis-
dain 80
The summons of the minstrel train,
But while our harps wild music
make,
Edith of Lorn, awake, awake!

III

'O wake while Dawn with dewy
shine
Wakes Nature's charms to vie
with thine!
She bids the mottled thrush re-
joice
To mate thy melody of voice;
The dew that on the violet lies
Mocks the dark lustre of thine
eyes;
But, Edith, wake, and all we see
Of sweet and fair shall yield to
thee!' — 91
'She comes not yet,' gray Ferrand
cried;
'Brethren, let softer spell be tried,
Those notes prolonged, that sooth-
ing theme,
Which best may mix with Beauty's
dream,
And whisper with their silvery
tone
The hope she loves yet fears to
own.'
He spoke, and on the harp-strings
died
The strains of flattery and of
pride;
More soft, more low, more tender
fell 100
The lay of love he bade them tell.

IV

'Wake, Maid of Lorn! the mo-
ments fly
Which yet that maiden-name
allow;
Wake, Maiden, wake! the hour is
nigh
When love shall claim a plighted
vow.

By Fear, thy bosom's fluttering
guest,
By Hope, that soon shall fears
remove,
We bid thee break the bonds of
rest,
And wake thee at the call of
Love!

'Wake, Edith, wake! in yonder
bay 110
Lies many a galley gayly man-
ned,
We hear the merry pibroch's play,
We see the streamers' silken
band.
What chieftain's praise these pi-
brochs swell,
What crest is on these banners
wove,
The harp, the minstrel, dare not
tell—
The riddle must be read by
Love.'

V

Retired her maiden train among,
Edith of Lorn received the song,
But tamed the minstrel's pride
had been 120
That had her cold demeanor seen;
For not upon her cheek awoke
The glow of pride when Flattery
spoke,
Nor could their tenderest numbers
bring
One sigh responsive to the string.
As vainly had her maidens vied
In skill to deck the princely bride.
Her locks in dark-brown length
arrayed,
Cathleen of Ulne, 't was thine to
braid;
Young Eva with meet reverence
drew 130
On the light foot the silken shoe,
While on the ankle's slender round
Those strings of pearl fair Bertha
wound
That, bleached Lochryan's depths
within,

Seemed dusky still on Edith's skin.
But Einion, of experience old,
Had weightiest task—the mantle's fold

In many an artful plait she tied
To show the form it seemed to hide,
Till on the floor descending rolled
Its waves of crimson blent with gold. 141

VI

O, lives there now so cold a maid,
Who thus in beauty's pomp arrayed,
In beauty's proudest pitch of power,
And conquest won—the bridal hour—
With every charm that wins the heart,
By Nature given, enhanced by Art,

Could yet the fair reflection view
In the bright mirror pictured true,
And not one dimple on her cheek
A telltale consciousness bespeak?— 151

Lives still such maid?—Fair damsels, say,
For further vouches not my lay
Save that such lived in Britain's isle
When Lorn's bright Edith scorned to smile.

VII

But Morag, to whose fostering care
Proud Lorn had given his daughter fair,

Morag, who saw a mother's aid
By all a daughter's love repaid—
Strict was that bond, most kind of all, 160

Inviolat in Highland hall—
Gray Morag sate a space apart,
In Edith's eyes to read her heart.
In vain the attendant's fond appeal
To Morag's skill, to Morag's zeal;

Shè marked her child receive their care,
Cold as the image sculptured fair—

Form of some sainted patroness—
Which cloistered maids combine to dress;

She marked—and knew her nursing's heart 170

In the vain pomp took little part.
Wistful awhile she gazed—then pressed

The maiden to her anxious breast
In finished loveliness—and led
To where a turret's airy head,
Slender and steep and battled round,

O'erlooked, dark Mull, thy mighty Sound,

Where thwarting tides with mingled roar

Part thy swarth hills from Mor-en's shore.

VIII

'Daughter,' she said, 'these seas behold, 180

Round twice a hundred islands rolled,

From Hirt that hears their northern roar

To the green Ilay's fertile shore;
Or mainland turn where many a tower

Owens thy bold brother's feudal power,

Each on its own dark cape reclined

And listening to its own wild wind,
From where Mingarry sternly placed

O'erawes the woodland and the waste,

To where Dunstaffnage hears the raging 190

Of Connal with its rocks engaging.
Think'st thou amid this ample round

A single brow but thine has frowned,

To sadden this auspicious morn

That bids the daughter of high
Lorn

Implodge her spousal faith to wed
The heir of mighty Somerled?

Ronald, from many a hero sprung,
The fair, the valiant, and the
young,

LORD OF THE ISLES, whose lofty
name 200

A thousand bards have given to
fame,

The mate of monarchs, and allied
On equal terms with England's
pride.—

From chieftain's tower to bonds-
man's cot,

Who hears the tale, and triumphs
not?

The damsel dons her best attire,
The shepherd lights his beltane
fire,

Joy! joy! each warder's horn hath
sung,

Joy! joy! each matin bell hath
rung; 209

The holy priest says grateful mass,
Loud shouts each hardy galla-
glass,

No mountain den holds outcast
boor

Of heart so dull, of soul so poor,
But he hath flung his task aside,
And claimed this morn for holy-
tide;

Yet, empress of this joyful day,
Edith is sad while all are gay.'

IX

Proud Edith's soul came to her
eye,

Resentment checked the struggling
sigh. 219

Her hurrying hand indignant dried
The burning tears of injured
pride—

'Morag, forbear! or lend thy praise
To swell yon hireling harpers' lays;
Make to yon maids thy boast of
power,

That they may waste a wondering
hour

Telling of banners proudly borne,
Of pealing bell and bugle horn,
Or, theme more dear, of robes of
price,

Crownlets and gauds of rare device.
But thou, experienced as thou art,
Think'st thou with these to cheat
the heart 231

That, bound in strong affection's
chain,

Looks for return and looks in vain?
No! sum thine Edith's wretched
lot

In these brief words—He loves
her not!

X

'Debate it not—too long I strove
To call his cold observance love,
All blinded by the league that
styled

Edith of Lorn—while yet a child
She tripped the heath by Morag's
side— 240

The brave Lord Ronald's destined
bride.

Ere yet I saw him, while afar
His broadsword blazed in Scot-
land's war,

Trained to believe our fates the
same,

My bosom throbbed when Ronald's
name

Came gracing Fame's heroic tale,
Like perfume on the summer gale.
What pilgrim sought our halls nor
told

Of Ronald's deeds in battle bold;
Who touched the harp to heroes'
praise 250

But his achievements swelled the
lays?

Even Morag—not a tale of fame
Was hers but closed with Ronald's
name.

He came! and all that had been
told

Of his high worth seemed poor and
cold,

Tame, lifeless, void of energy,
Unjust to Ronald and to me!

XI

'Since then, what thought had
Edith's heart
And gave not plighted love its
part!—²⁵⁹
And what requital? cold delay—
Excuse that shunned the spousal
day.—
It dawns and Ronald is not
here!—
Hunts he Bentalla's nimble deer,
Or loiters he in secret dell
To bid some lighter love farewell,
And swear that though he may not
scorn
A daughter of the House of Lorn,
Yet, when these formal rites are
o'er,
Again they meet to part no more?'

XII

'Hush, daughter, hush! thy doubts
remove,²⁷⁰
More nobly think of Ronald's love.
Look, where beneath the castle
gray
His fleet unmoor from Aros bay!
See'st not each galley's topmast
bend
As on the yards the sails ascend?
Hiding the dark-blue land they
rise,
Like the white clouds on April
skies;
The shouting vassals man the
oars,
Behind them sink Mull's mountain
shores,
Onward their merry course they
keep²⁸⁰
Through whistling breeze and
foaming deep.
And mark the headmost, seaward
cast,
Stoop to the freshening gale her
mast,
As if she veiled its bannered pride
To greet afar her prince's bride!
Thy Ronald comes, and while in
speed
His galley mates the flying steed,

He chides her sloth!'— Fair Edith
sighed,
Blushed, sadly smiled, and thus
replied:

XIII

'Sweet thought, but vain!— No,
Morag! mark,²⁹⁰
Type of his course, yon lonely bark,
That oft hath shifted helm and
sail
To win its way against the gale.
Since peep of morn my vacant
eyes
Have viewed by fits the course she
tries;
Now, though the darkening scud
comes on,
And dawn's fair promises be gone,
And though the weary crew may
see
Our sheltering haven on their lee,
Still closer to the rising wind³⁰⁰
They strive her shivering sail to
bind,
Still nearer to the shelves' dread
verge
At every tack her course they urge,
As if they feared Artornish more
Than adverse winds and breakers'
roar.'

XIV

Sooth spoke the maid. Amid the
tide
The skiff she marked lay tossing
sore,
And shifted oft her stooping side,
In weary tack from shore to
shore.
Yet on her destined course no
more³¹⁰
She gained of forward way
Than what a minstrel may com-
pare
To the poor meed which peasants
share
Who toil the livelong day;
And such the risk her pilot
braves
That oft, before she wore,

Her boltsprit kissed the broken
waves

Where in white foam the ocean
raves

Upon the shelving shore.

Yet, to their destined purpose
true, 320

Undaunted toiled her hardy
crew,

Nor looked where shelter lay,

Nor for Artornish Castle drew,

Nor steered for Aros bay.

XV

Thus while they strove with wind
and seas,

Borne onward by the willing
breeze,

Lord Ronald's fleet swept by,
Streamered with silk and tricked
with gold,

Manned with the noble and the
bold

Of Island chivalry. 330

Around their prowls the ocean
roars,

And chafes beneath their thousand
oars,

Yet bears them on their way:

So chafes the war-horse in his
might

That fieldward bears some valiant
knight,

Champs till both bit and boss are
white,

But foaming must obey.

On each gay deck they might be-
hold

Lances of steel and crests of gold,
And hauberks with their burnished
fold 340

That shimmered fair and free;

And each proud galley as she
passed

To the wild cadence of the blast

Gave wilder minstrelsy.

Full many a shrill triumphant note

Saline and Scallastle bade float

Their misty shores around;

And Morven's echoes answered
well, 348

And Duart heard the distant swell
Come down the darksome Sound.

XVI

So bore they on with mirth and
pride,

And if that laboring bark they
spied,

'T was with such idle eye

As nobles cast on lowly boor

When, toiling in his task obscure,

They pass him careless by.

Let them sweep on with heedless
eyes!

But had they known what mighty
prize

In that frail vessel lay,

The famished wolf that prowls the
wold 360

Had scathless passed the un-
guarded fold,

Ere, drifting by these galleys bold,
Unchallenged were her way!

And thou, Lord Ronald, sweep
thou on

With mirth and pride and minstrel
tone!

But hadst thou known who sailed
so nigh,

Far other glance were in thine
eye!

Far other flush were on thy brow,
That, shaded by the bonnet, now

Assumes but ill the blithesome
cheer 370

Of bridegroom when the bride is
near!

XVII

Yes, sweep they on! — We will not
leave,

For them that triumph, those who
grieve.

With that armada gay

Be laughter loud and jocund shout,
And bards to cheer the wassail
rout

With tale, romance, and lay;

And of wild mirth each clamorous
art,

Which, if it cannot cheer the heart,

May stupefy and stun its smart 380
 For one loud busy day.
 Yes, sweep they on!—But with
 that skiff
 Abides the minstrel tale,
 Where there was dread of surge
 and cliff,
 Labor that strained each sinew
 stiff,
 And one sad maiden's wail.

XVIII

All day with fruitless strife they
 toiled,
 With eve the ebbing currents
 boiled
 More fierce from strait and lake;
 And midway through the channel
 met 390
 Conflicting tides that foam and
 fret,
 And high their mingled billows
 jet,
 As spears that in the battle set
 Spring upward as they break.
 Then too the lights of eve were
 past,
 And louder sung the western blast
 On rocks of Inninmore;
 Rent was the sail, and strained
 the mast,
 And many a leak was gaping fast,
 And the pale steersman stood
 aghast 400
 And gave the conflict o'er.

XIX

'T was then that One whose lofty
 look
 Nor labor dulled nor terror shook
 Thus to the leader spoke:—
 'Brother, how hop'st thou to
 abide
 The fury of this wildered tide,
 Or how avoid the rock's rude side
 Until the day has broke?
 Didst thou not mark the vessel
 reel
 With quivering planks and groan-
 ing keel 410
 At the last billow's shock?

Yet how of better counsel tell,
 Though here thou see'st poor
 Isabel

Half dead with want and fear;
 For look on sea, or look on land,
 Or yon dark sky, on every hand
 Despair and death are near.
 For her alone I grieve—on me
 Danger sits light by land and sea,
 I follow where thou wilt; 420
 Either to bide the tempest's lour,
 Or wend to yon unfriendly tower,
 Or rush amid their naval power,
 With war-cry wake their wassail-
 hour,
 And die with hand on hilt.'

XX

That elder leader's calm reply
 In steady voice was given,
 'In man's most dark extremity
 Oft succor dawns from heaven.
 Edward, trim thou the shattered
 sail, 430
 The helm be mine, and down the
 gale
 Let our free course be driven;
 So shall we 'scape the western
 bay,
 The hostile fleet, the unequal fray;
 So safely hold our vessel's way
 Beneath the castle wall;
 For if a hope of safety rest,
 'T is on the sacred name of guest,
 Who seeks for shelter storm-dis-
 tressed

Within a chieftain's hall. 440
 If not—the best beseems our
 worth,
 Our name, our right, our lofty
 birth,
 By noble hands to fall.'

XXI

The helm, to his strong arm con-
 signed,
 Gave the reefed sail to meet the
 wind,
 And on her altered way
 Fierce bounding forward sprung
 the ship,

Like greyhound starting from the
slip

To seize his flying prey.

Awaked before the rushing
prow 450

The mimic fires of ocean glow,

Those lightnings of the wave;
Wild sparkles crest the broken
tides,

And flashing round the vessel's
sides

With elfish lustre lave,

While far behind their livid light

To the dark billows of the night

A gloomy splendor gave.

It seems as if old Ocean shakes

From his dark brow the lucid
flakes 460

In envious pageantry,

To match the meteor-light that
streaks

Grim Hecla's midnight sky.

XXII

Nor lacked they steadier light to
keep

Their course upon the darkened
deep;

Artornish, on her frowning steep

'Twixt cloud and ocean hung,

Glanced with a thousand lights of
glee,

And landward far and far to sea

Her festal radiance flung. 470

By that blithe beacon-light they
steered,

Whose lustre mingled well

With the pale beam that now ap-
peared,

As the cold moon her head up-
reared

Above the eastern fell.

XXIII

Thus guided, on their course they
bore

Until they neared the mainland
shore,

When frequent on the hollow blast
Wild shouts of merriment were
cast,

And wind and wave and sea-birds'
cry 480

With wassail sounds in concert
vie,

Like funeral shrieks with revelry,

Or like the battle-shout

By peasants heard from cliffs on
high

When Triumph, Rage, and Agony

Madden the fight and rout.

Now nearer yet through mist and
storm

Dimly arose the castle's form

And deepened shadow made,

Far lengthened on the main be-
low, 490

Where dancing in reflected glow

A hundred torches played,

Spangling the wave with lights as
vain

As pleasures in this vale of pain,

That dazzle as they fade.

XXIV

Beneath the castle's sheltering lee
They staid their course in quiet
sea.

Hewn in the rock, a passage there
Sought the dark fortress by a
stair,

So strait, so high, so steep, 500
With peasant's staff one valiant
hand

Might well the dizzy pass have
manned

'Gainst hundreds armed with
spear and brand

And plunged them in the deep.

His bugle then the helmsman
wound:

Loud answered every echo round

From turret, rock, and bay;

The postern's hinges crash and
groan,

And soon the warder's cresset
shone

On those rude steps of slippery
stone, 510

To light the upward way.

'Thrice welcome, holy Sire!' he
said;

' Full long the spousal train have
staid,
And, vexed at thy delay,
Feared lest amidst these wildering
seas
The darksome night and freshen-
ing breeze
Had driven thy bark astray.' —

XXV

' Warder,' the younger stranger
said,
' Thine erring guess some mirth
had made
In mirthful hour; but nights like
these, ⁵²⁰
When the rough winds wake west-
ern seas,
Brook not of glee. We crave some
aid
And needful shelter for this maid
Until the break of day;
For to ourselves the deck's rude
plank
Is easy as the mossy bank
That's breathed upon by May.
And for our storm-tossed skiff we
seek
Short shelter in this leeward
creek,
Prompt when the dawn the east
shall streak ⁵³⁰
Again to bear away.'
Answered the warder, ' In what
name
Assert ye hospitable claim?
Whence come or whither bound?
Hath Erin seen your parting sails,
Or come ye on Norweyan gales?
And seek ye England's fertile
vales,
Or Scotland's mountain ground?'

XXVI

' Warriors — for other title none
For some brief space we list to
own, ⁵⁴⁰
Bound by a vow — warriors are
we;
In strife by land and storm by sea
We have been known to fame;

And these brief words have import
dear,
When sounded in a noble ear,
To harbor safe and friendly cheer
That gives us rightful claim.
Grant us the trivial boon we seek,
And we in other realms will speak
Fair of your courtesy; ⁵⁵⁰
Deny — and be your niggard hold
Scorned by the noble and the bold,
Shunned by the pilgrim on the
wold
And wanderer on the lea!'

XXVII

' Bold stranger, no — 'gainst claim
like thine
No bolt revolves by hand of mine,
Though urged in tone that more
expressed
A monarch than a suppliant guest.
Be what ye will, Artornish Hall
On this glad eve is free to all. ⁵⁶⁰
Though ye had drawn a hostile
sword
'Gainst our ally, great England's
Lord,
Or mail upon your shoulders borne
To battle with the Lord of Lorn,
Or outlawed dwelt by greenwood
tree
With the fierce Knight of Ellers-
lie,
Or aided even the murderous
strife
When Comyn fell beneath the
knife
Of that fell homicide the Bruce,
This night had been a term of
truce. — ⁵⁷⁰
Ho, vassals! give these guests
your care,
And show the narrow postern
stair.'

XXVIII

To land these two bold brethren
leapt —
The weary crew their vessel
kept —
And, lighted by the torches' flare

That seaward flung their smoky
glare,
The younger knight that maiden
bare
Half lifeless up the rock;
On his strong shoulder leaned her
head,
And down her long dark tresses
shed, 580
As the wild vine in tendrils spread
Droops from the mountain oak.
Him followed close that elder lord,
And in his hand a sheathed sword
Such as few arms could wield;
But when he bouned him to such
task
Well could it cleave the strongest
casque
And rend the surest shield.

XXIX

The raised portcullis' arch they
pass,
The wicket with its bars of brass,
The entrance long and low, 591
Flanked at each turn by loop-holes
strait,
Where bowmen might in ambush
wait—
If force or fraud should burst the
gate—
To gall an entering foe.
But every jealous post of ward
Was now defenceless and un-
barred,
And all the passage free
To one low-browed and vaulted
room
Where squire and yeoman, page
and groom, 600
Plied their loud revelry.

XXX

And 'Rest ye here,' the warder
bade,
'Till to our lord your suit is said. —
And, comrades, gaze not on the
maid
And on these men who ask our
aid,
As if ye ne'er had seen

A damsel tired of midnight bark
Or wanderers of a moulding stark
And bearing martial mien.'
But not for Eachin's reproof 610
Would page or vassal stand aloof,
But crowded on to stare,
As men of courtesy untaught,
Till fiery Edward roughly caught
From one the foremost there
His chequered plaid, and in its
shroud,
To hide her from the vulgar crowd,
Involved his sister fair.
His brother, as the clansman bent
His sullen brow in discontent, 620
Made brief and stern excuse :
'Vassal, were thine the cloak of
pall
That decks thy lord in bridal
hall,
'T were honored by her use.'

XXXI

Proud was his tone but calm; his
eye
Had that compelling dignity,
His mien that bearing haught and
high,
Which common spirits fear;
Needed nor word nor signal more,
Nod, wink, and laughter, all were
o'er; 630
Upon each other back they bore
And gazed like startled deer.
But now appeared the seneschal,
Commissioned by his lord to call
The strangers to the baron's hall,
Where feasted fair and free
That Island Prince in nuptial tide
With Edith there his lovely bride,
And her bold brother by her side,
And many a chief, the flower and
pride 640
Of Western land and sea.

Here pause we, gentles, for a
space;
And, if our tale hath won your
grace,
Grant us brief patience and again
We will renew the minstrel strain.

CANTO SECOND

I

FILL the bright goblet, spread
the festive board !
Summon the gay, the noble, and
the fair !
Through the loud hall in joyous
concert poured,
Let mirth and music sound the
dirge of Care !
But ask thou not if Happiness
be there,
If the loud laugh disguise con-
vulsive throe,
Or if the brow the heart's true
livery wear ;
Lift not the festal mask !—
enough to know,
No scene of mortal life but teems
with mortal woe.

II

With beakers' clang, with harpers'
lay, 10
With all that olden time deemed
gay,
The Island Chieftain feasted high ;
But there was in his troubled eye
A gloomy fire, and on his brow
Now sudden flushed and faded
now
Emotions such as draw their birth
From deeper source than festal
mirth.
By fits he paused, and harper's
strain
And jester's tale went round in
vain,
Or fell but on his idle ear 20
Like distant sounds which dream-
ers hear.
Then would he rouse him, and em-
ploy
Each art to aid the clamorous
joy,
And call for pledge and lay,
And for brief space of all the
crowd,
As he was loudest of the loud,
Seem gayest of the gay.

III

Yet naught amiss the bridal
throng
Marked in brief mirth or musing
long ;
The vacant brow, the unlistening
ear, 30
They gave to thoughts of raptures
near,
And his fierce starts of sudden
glee
Seemed bursts of bridegroom's
ecstasy.
Nor thus alone misjudged the
crowd,
Since lofty Lorn, suspicious, proud,
And jealous of his honored line,
And that keen knight, De Argen-
tine —
From England sent on errand
high
The western league more firm to
tie —
Both deemed in Ronald's mood to
find 40
A lover's transport-troubled mind.
But one sad heart, one tearful eye,
Pierced deeper through the mys-
tery,
And watched with agony and fear
Her wayward bridegroom's varied
cheer.

IV

She watched — yet feared to meet
his glance,
And he shunned hers ; — till when
by chance
They met, the point of foeman's
lance
Had given a milder pang !
Beneath the intolerable smart 50
He writhed ; — then sternly manned
his heart
To play his hard but destined
part,
And from the table sprang.
' Fill me the mighty cup, he said,
' Erst owned by royal Somerled !
Fill it, till on the studded brim
In burning gold the bubbles swim,

And every gem of varied shine
 Glow doubly bright in rosy wine !
 To you, brave lord, and brother
 mine, 60
 Of Lorn, this pledge I drink —
 The Union of Our House with
 thine,
 By this fair bridal-link !'

V

'Let it pass round !' quoth he of
 Lorn,
 'And in good time — that winded
 horn
 Must of the abbot tell ;
 The laggard monk is come at last.'
 Lord Ronald heard the bugle-
 blast,
 And on the floor at random cast
 The untasted goblet fell. 70
 But when the warder in his ear
 Tells other news, his blither cheer
 Returns like sun of May
 When through a thunder-cloud it
 beams ! —
 Lord of two hundred isles, he
 seems
 As glad of brief delay
 As some poor criminal might feel
 When from the gibbet or the
 wheel
 Respited for a day.

VI

'Brother of Lorn,' with hurried
 voice 80
 He said, 'and you, fair lords, re-
 joice !
 Here, to augment our glee,
 Come wandering knights from
 travel far,
 Well proved, they say, in strife of
 war
 And tempest on the sea.
 Ho ! give them at your board such
 place
 As best their presences may grace,
 And bid them welcome free !'
 With solemn step and silver wand,
 The seneschal the presence
 scanned 90

Of these strange guests, and well
 he knew
 How to assign their rank its due ;
 For though the costly furs
 That erst had decked their caps
 were torn,
 And their gay robes were over-
 worn,

And soiled their gilded spurs,
 Yet such a high commanding grace
 Was in their mien and in their face
 As suited best the princely dais
 And royal canopy ; 100
 And there he marshalled them
 their place,
 First of that company.

VII

Then lords and ladies spake aside,
 And angry looks the error chide
 That gave to guests unnamed, un-
 known,
 A place so near their prince's
 throne ;
 But Owen Erraught said,
 'For forty years a seneschal,
 To marshal guests in bower and
 hall
 Has been my honored trade. 110
 Worship and birth to me are
 known,
 By look, by bearing, and by tone,
 Not by furred robe or brodered
 zone ;

And 'gainst an oaken bough
 I'll gage my silver wand of state
 That these three strangers oft
 have sate
 In higher place than now.'

VIII

'I too,' the aged Ferrand said,
 'Am qualified by minstrel trade
 Of rank and place to tell ; — 120
 Marked ye the younger stranger's
 eye,
 My mates, how quick, how keen,
 how high,
 How fierce its flashes fell,
 Glancing among the noble rout
 As if to seek the noblest out,

Because the owner might not
brook

On any save his peers to look?

And yet it moves me more,
That steady, calm, majestic brow,
With which the elder chief even
now 130

Scanned the gay presence o'er,
Like being of superior kind,
In whose high-toned impartial
mind

Degrees of mortal rank and state
Seem objects of indifferent weight.

The lady too—though closely
tied

The mantle veil both face and
eye,

Her motions' grace it could not
hide,

Nor cloud her form's fair sym-
metry.'

IX

Suspicious doubt and lordly scorn
Loured on the haughty front of
Lorn. 141

From underneath his brows of
pride

The stranger guests he sternly
eyed,

And whispered closely what the
ear

Of Argentine alone might hear;

Then questioned, high and brief,
If in their voyage aught they knew
Of the rebellious Scottish crew
Who to Rath-Erin's shelter drew

With Carrick's outlawed Chief?
And if, their winter's exile o'er,
They harbored still by Ulster's
shore, 152

Or launched their galleys on the
main

To vex their native land again?

X

That younger stranger, fierce and
high,

At once confronts the chieftain's
eye

With look of equal scorn:

'Of rebels have we naught to show;
But if of royal Bruce thou 'dst
know,

I warn thee he has sworn, 160
Ere thrice three days shall come
and go,

His banner Scottish winds shall
blow,

Despite each mean or mighty
foe,

From England's every bill and bow
To Allaster of Lorn.'

Kindled the mountain chieftain's
ire,

But Ronald quenched the rising
fire:

'Brother, it better suits the time
To chase the night with Ferrand's
rhyme

Than wake midst mirth and wine
the jars 170

That flow from these unhappy
wars.'

'Content,' said Lorn; and spoke
apart

With Ferrand, master of his art,

Then whispered Argentine,

'The lay I named will carry smart
To these bold strangers' haughty
heart,

If right this guess of mine.'

He ceased, and it was silence all
Until the minstrel waked the hall.

XI

THE BROOCH OF LORN

'Whence the brooch of burning
gold 180

That clasps the chieftain's mantle-
fold,

Wrought and chased with rare de-
vice,

Studded fair with gems of price,

On the varied tartans beaming,

As, through night's pale rainbow
gleaming,

Fainter now, now seen afar,

Fitful shines the northern star?

'Gem! ne'er wrought on Highland
mountain,
Did the fairy of the fountain
Or the mermaid of the wave 190
Frame thee in some coral cave?
Did, in Iceland's darksome mine,
Dwarf's swart hands thy metal
twine?
Or, mortal-moulded, comest thou
here
From England's love or France's
fear?

XII

SONG CONTINUED

'No! — thy splendors nothing tell
Foreign art or faery spell.
Moulded thou for monarch's use,
By the overweening Bruce,
When the royal robe he tied 200
O'er a heart of wrath and pride;
Thence in triumph wert thou torn
By the victor hand of Lorn!

'When the gem was won and
lost,
Widely was the war-cry tossed!
Rung aloud Bendourish fell,
Answered Douchart's sounding
dell,
Fled the deer from wild Teyndrum,
When the homicide o'ercome
Hardly 'scaped with scathe and
scorn, 210
Left the pledge with conquering
Lorn!

XIII

SONG CONCLUDED

'Vain was then the Douglas
brand,
Vain the Campbell's vaunted hand,
Vain Kirkpatrick's bloody dirk,
Making sure of murder's work;
Barendown fled fast away,
Fled the fiery De la Haye,
When this brooch triumphant
borne
Beamed upon the breast of Lorn.

'Farthest fled its former lord, 220
Left his men to brand and cord,
Bloody brand of Highland steel,
English gibbet, axe, and wheel.
Let him fly from coast to coast,
Dogged by Comyn's vengeful
ghost,
While his spoils in triumph worn
Long shall grace victorious Lorn!'

XIV

As glares the tiger on his foes,
Hemmed in by hunters, spears,
and bows, 229
And, ere he bounds upon the ring,
Selects the object of his spring, —
Now on the bard, now on his lord,
So Edward glared and grasped his
sword —
But stern his brother spoke, 'Be
still.
What! art thou yet so wild of will,
After high deeds and sufferings
long,
To chafe thee for a menial's
song? —
Well hast thou framed, old man,
thy strains,
To praise the hand that pays thy
pains,
Yet something might thy song
have told 240
Of Lorn's three vassals, true and
bold,
Who rent their lord from Bruce's
hold
As underneath his knee he lay,
And died to save him in the fray.
I've heard the Bruce's cloak and
clasp
Was clenched within their dying
grasp,
What time a hundred foemen more
Rushed in and back the victor
bore,
Long after Lorn had left the strife,
Full glad to 'scape with limb and
life. — 250
Enough of this — and, minstrel,
hold
As minstrel-hire this chain of gold,

For future lays a fair excuse
To speak more nobly of the
Bruce.' —

XV

'Now, by Columba's shrine, I
swear,
And every saint that's buried
there,
'T is he himself!' Lorn sternly
cries,
'And for my kinsman's death he
dies.'

As loudly Ronald calls, 'Forbear!
Not in my sight while brand I
wear, 260

O'ermatched by odds, shall war-
rior fall,
Or blood of stranger stain my hall!
This ancient fortress of my race
Shall be misfortune's resting-
place,

Shelter and shield of the dis-
tressed,
No slaughter-house for ship-
wrecked guest.'

'Talk not to me,' fierce Lorn re-
plied,

'Of odds or match! — when Comyn
died,

Three daggers clashed within his
side! 269

Talk not to me of sheltering hall,
The Church of God saw Comyn
fall!

On God's own altar streamed his
blood,

While o'er my prostrate kinsman
stood

The ruthless murderer — e'en as
now —

With armed hand and scornful
brow! —

Up, all who love me! blow on blow!
And lay the outlawed felons low!'

XVI

Then up sprang many a mainland
lord,

Obedient to their chieftain's word.
Barcaldine's arm is high in air, 280

And Kinloch-Alline's blade is bare,
Black Murthok's dirk has left its
sheath,

And clenched is Dermid's hand of
death.

Their muttered threats of ven-
geance swell

Into a wild and warlike yell;
Onward they press with weapons
high,

The affrighted females shriek and
fly,

And, Scotland, then thy brightest
ray 288

Had darkened ere its noon of
day,

But every chief of birth and fame
That from the Isles of Ocean came
At Ronald's side that hour with-
stood

Fierce Lorn's relentless thirst for
blood.

XVII

Brave Torquil from Dunvegan
high,

Lord of the misty hills of Skye,
Mac-Niel, wild Bara's ancient
thane,

Duart of bold Clan-Gillian's strain,
Fergus of Canna's castled bay,
Mac-Duffith, Lord of Colonsay,
Soon as they saw the broadswords
glance, 300

With ready weapons rose at once,
More prompt that many an ancient
feud,

Full oft suppressed, full oft re-
newed,

Glowed 'twixt the chieftains of
Argyle,

And many a lord of ocean's isle.

Wild was the scene — each sword
was bare,

Back streamed each chieftain's
shaggy hair,

In gloomy opposition set,
Eyes, hands, and brandished wea-
pons met;

Blue gleaming o'er the social
board, 310

Flashed to the torches many a
sword;
And soon those bridal lights may
shine
On purple blood for rosy wine.

XVIII

While thus for blows and death
prepared,
Each heart was up, each weapon
bared,
Each foot advanced,—a surly
pause
Still revered hospitable laws.
All menaced violence, but alike
Reluctant each the first to strike —
For aye accursed in minstrel line
Is he who brawls mid song and
wine, 321
And, matched in numbers and in
might,
Doubtful and desperate seemed
the fight.
Thus threat and murmur died
away,
Till on the crowded hall there lay
Such silence as the deadly still
Ere bursts the thunder on the hill.
With blade advanced, each chief-
tain bold
Showed like the Swordsman's form of
old, 329
As wanting still the torch of life
To wake the marble into strife.

XIX

That awful pause the stranger
maid
And Edith seized to pray for aid.
As to De Argentine she clung,
Away her veil the stranger flung,
And, lovely mid her wild despair,
Fast streamed her eyes, wide
flowed her hair:
'O thou, of knighthood once the
flower,
Sure refuge in distressful hour,
Thou who in Judah well hast
fought 340
For our dear faith and oft hast
sought

Renown in knightly exercise
When this poor hand has dealt the
prize,
Say, can thy soul of honor brook
On the unequal strife to look,
When, butchered thus in peaceful
hall,
Those once thy friends, my bre-
thren, fall!'
To Argentine she turned her word,
But her eye sought the Island
Lord.
A flush like evening's setting
flame 350
Glowed on his cheek; his hardy
frame
As with a brief convulsion shook:
With hurried voice and eager look,
'Fear not,' he said, 'my Isabel!
What said I—Edith!—all is
well—
Nay, fear not—I will well provide
The safety of my lovely bride—
My bride?'—but there the accents
clung
In tremor to his faltering tongue.

XX

Now rose De Argentine to claim
The prisoners in his sovereign's
name 361
To England's crown, who, vassals
sworn,
'Gainst their liege lord had wea-
pon borne—
Such speech, I ween, was but to
hide
His care their safety to provide;
For knight more true in thought
and deed
Than Argentine ne'er spurred a
steed—
And Ronald who his meaning
guessed
Seemed half to sanction the re-
quest. 369
This purpose fiery Torquil broke:
'Somewhat we've heard of Eng-
land's yoke,'
He said, 'and in our islands Fame
Hath whispered of a lawful claim

That calls the Bruce fair Scotland's
lord,
Though dispossessed by foreign
sword.

This craves reflection — but
though right
And just the charge of England's
Knight,
Let England's crown her rebels
seize
Where she has power; — in towers
like these,
Midst Scottish chieftains sum-
moned here 380
To bridal mirth and bridal cheer,
Be sure, with no consent of mine
Shall either Lorn or Argentine
With chains or violence, in our
sight,
Oppress a brave and banished
knight.'

XXI

Then waked the wild debate again
With brawling threat and clamor
vain.

Vassals and menials thronging in
Lent their brute rage to swell the
din; 389

When far and wide a bugle-clang
From the dark ocean upward rang.
'The abbot comes!' they cry at
once,

'The holy man, whose favored
glance

Hath sainted visions known;
Angels have met him on the way,
Beside the blessed martyr's bay,
And by Columba's stone.

His monks have heard their hymn-
ings high

Sound from the summit of Dun-Y,
To cheer his penance lone, 400

When at each cross, on girth and
wold —

Their number thrice a hundred-
fold —

His prayer he made, his beads he
told,

With Aves many a one —
He comes our feuds to reconcile,

A sainted man from sainted isle;
We will his holy doom abide,
The abbot shall our strife decide.'

XXII

Scarcely this fair accord was o'er
When through the wide revolving
door 410

The black-stoled brethren wind;
Twelve sandalled monks who re-
lies bore,

With many a torch-bearer before
And many a cross behind.

Then sunk each fierce uplifted
hand,

And dagger bright and flashing
brand

Dropped swiftly at the sight;
They vanished from the Church-
man's eye,

As shooting stars that glance and
die

Dart from the vault of night. 420

XXIII

The abbot on the threshold stood,
And in his hand the holy rood;
Back on his shoulders flowed his
hood,

The torch's glaring ray
Showed in its red and flashing
light

His withered cheek and amice
white,

His blue eye glistening cold and
bright,

His tresses scant and gray.
'Fair Lords,' he said, 'Our Lady's
love,

And peace be with you from above,
And Benedicite! — 431

But what means this? — no peace
is here! —

Do dirks unsheathed suit bridal
cheer?

Or are these naked brands
A seemly show for Churchman's
sight

When he comes summoned to
unite

Betrothed hearts and hands?'

XXIV

Then, cloaking hate with fiery zeal,
Proud Lorn first answered the appeal:

'Thou com'st, O holy man, ⁴⁴⁰
True sons of blessed church to greet,

But little deeming here to meet
A wretch beneath the ban
Of Pope and Church for murder done

Even on the sacred altar-stone —
Well mayst thou wonder we should know

Such miscreant here, nor lay him low,

Or dream of greeting, peace, or truce,

With excommunicated Bruce! ⁴⁴⁹
Yet well I grant, to end debate,
Thy sainted voice decide his fate.'

XXV

Then Roland pled the stranger's cause,

And knighthood's oath and honor's laws;

And Isabel on bended knee
Brought prayers and tears to back the plea;

And Edith lent her generous aid,
And wept, and Lorn for mercy prayed.

'Hence,' he exclaimed, 'degenerate maid!

Was 't not enough to Ronald's bower ⁴⁵⁹

I brought thee, like a paramour,
Or bond-maid at her master's gate,
His careless cold approach to wait? —

But the bold Lord of Cumberland,
The gallant Clifford, seeks thy hand;

His it shall be — Nay, no reply!
Hence! till those rebel eyes be dry.'

With grief the abbot heard and saw,

Yet naught relaxed his brow of awe,

XXVI

Then Argentine, in England's name,

So highly urged his sovereign's claim ⁴⁷⁰

He waked a spark that long suppressed

Had smouldered in Lord Ronald's breast;

And now, as from the flint the fire,

Flashed forth at once his generous ire.

'Enough of noble blood,' he said,
'By English Edward had been shed,

Since matchless Wallace first had been

In mockery crowned with wreaths of green,

And done to death by felon hand
For guarding well his father's land. ⁴⁸⁰

Where 's Nigel Bruce? and De la Haye,

And valiant Seton — where are they?

Where Somerville, the kind and free?

And Fraser, flower of chivalry?
Have they not been on gibbet bound,

Their quarters flung to hawk and hound,

And hold we here a cold debate
To yield more victims to their fate?

What! can the English Leopard's mood

Never be gorged with northern blood? ⁴⁹⁰

Was not the life of Athole shed
To soothe the tyrant's sickened bed?

And must his word till dying day
Be naught but quarter, hang, and slay! —

Thou frown'st, De Argentine, — my gage

Is prompt to prove the strife I wage.'

XXVII

'Nor deem,' said stout Dunvegan's knight,
 'That thou shalt brave alone the fight!
 By saints of isle and mainland both,
 By Woden wild — my grandsire's oath — ⁵⁰⁰
 Let Rome and England do their worst,
 Howe'er attainted or accursed,
 If Bruce shall e'er find friends again
 Once more to brave a battle-plain,
 If Douglas couch again his lance,
 Or Randolph dare another chance,
 Old Torquil will not be to lack
 With twice a thousand at his back. —
 Nay, chafe not at my bearing bold,
 Good abbot! for thou know'st of old, ⁵¹⁰
 Torquil's rude thought and stubborn will
 Smack of the wild Norwegian still;
 Nor will I barter Freedom's cause
 For England's wealth or Rome's applause.'

XXVIII

The abbot seemed with eye severe
 The hardy chieftain's speech to hear;
 Then on King Robert turned the monk,
 But twice his courage came and sunk,
 Confronted with the hero's look;
 Twice fell his eye, his accents shook; ⁵²⁰
 At length, resolved in tone and brow,
 Sternly he questioned him — 'And thou,
 Unhappy! what hast thou to plead,
 Why I denounce not on thy deed
 That awful doom which canons tell
 Shuts paradise and opens hell;
 Anathema of power so dread,

It blends the living with the dead,
 Bids each good angel soar away
 And every ill one claim his prey;
 Expels thee from the church's care ⁵³¹
 And deafens Heaven against thy prayer;
 Arms every hand against thy life,
 Bans all who aid thee in the strife,
 Nay, each whose succor, cold and scant,
 With meanest alms relieves thy want;
 Haunts thee while living, — and when dead
 Dwells on thy yet devoted head,
 Rends Honor's scutcheon from thy hearse, ⁵³⁹
 Stills o'er thy bier the holy verse,
 And spurns thy corpse from hallowed ground,
 Flung like vile carrion to the hound:
 Such is the dire and desperate doom
 For sacrilege, decreed by Rome;
 And such the well-deserved meed
 Of thine unhallowed, ruthless deed.'

XXIX

'Abbot!' the Bruce replied, 'thy charge
 It boots not to dispute at large.
 This much, howe'er, I bid thee know,
 No selfish vengeance dealt the blow, ⁵⁵⁰
 For Comyn died his country's foe.
 Nor blame I friends whose ill-timed speed
 Fulfilled my soon-repentent deed,
 Nor censure those from whose stern tongue
 The dire anathema has rung.
 I only blame mine own wild ire,
 By Scotland's wrongs incensed to fire.
 Heaven knows my purpose to atone,
 Far as I may, the evil done,

And hears a penitent's appeal 560
From papal curse and prelate's
zeal.

My first and dearest task achieved,
Fair Scotland from her thrall re-
lieved,

Shall many a priest in cope and
stole

Say requiem for Red Comyn's soul,
While I the blessed cross advance
And expiate this unhappy chance
In Palestine with sword and lance.

But, while content the Church
should know

My conscience owns the debt I
owe, 570

Unto De Argentine and Lorn
The name of traitor I return,
Bid them defiance stern and high,
And give them in their throats the
lie!

These brief words spoke, I speak
no more.

Do what thou wilt; my shrift is
o'er.'

XXX

Like man by prodigy amazed,
Upon the king the abbot gazed;
Then o'er his pallid features
glance

Convulsions of ecstatic trance. 580
His breathing came more thick
and fast,

And from his pale blue eyes were
cast

Strange rays of wild and wander-
ing light;

Uprise his locks of silver white,
Flushed is his brow, through every
vein

In azure tide the currents strain,
And undistinguished accents broke
The awful silence ere he spoke.

XXXI

'De Bruce! I rose with purpose
dread 589

To speak my curse upon thy head,
And give thee as an outcast o'er
To him who burns to shed thy
gore;—

But, like the Midianite of old
Who stood on Zophim, Heaven-
controlled,

I feel within mine aged breast
A power that will not be repressed.
It prompts my voice, it swells my
veins,

It burns, it maddens, it con-
strains!—

De Bruce, thy sacrilegious blow
Hath at God's altar slain thy
foe:

O'ermastered yet by high behest,
I bless thee, and thou shalt be
blessed!' 602

He spoke, and o'er the astonished
throng

Was silence, awful, deep, and long.

XXXII

Again that light has fired his eye,
Again his form swells bold and
high,

The broken voice of age is gone,
'T is vigorous manhood's lofty
tone:

'Thrice vanquished on the battle-
plain,

Thy followers slaughtered, fled, or
ta'en, 610

A hunted wanderer on the wild,
On foreign shores a man exiled,
Disowned, deserted, and dis-
tressed,

I bless thee, and thou shalt be
blessed!

Blessed in the hall and in the field,
Under the mantle as the shield.

Avenger of thy country's shame,
Restorer of her injured fame,

Blessed in thy sceptre and thy
sword,

De Bruce, for Scotland's rightful
lord, 620

Blessed in thy deeds and in thy
fame,

What lengthened honors wait thy
name!

In distant ages sire to son
Shall tell thy tale of freedom
won,

And teach his infants in the use
Of earliest speech to falter Bruce.
Go, then, triumphant! sweep along
Thy course, the theme of many a
song!

The Power whose dictates swell
my breast

Hath blessed thee, and thou shalt
be blessed! — 630

Enough — my short-lived strength
decays,

And sinks the momentary blaze. —
Heaven hath our destined purpose
broke,

Not here must nuptial vow be
spoke;

Brethren, our errand here is o'er,
Our task discharged. — Unmoor,
unmoor!'

His priests received the exhausted
monk,

As breathless in their arms he
sunk.

Punctual his orders to obey,
The train refused all longer stay,
Embarked, raised sail, and bore
away. 641

CANTO THIRD

I

HAST thou not marked when
o'er thy startled head

Sudden and deep the thunder-
peal has rolled,

How, when its echoes fell, a si-
lence dead

Sunk on the wood, the meadow,
and the wold?

The rye-grass shakes not on the
sod-built fold,

The rustling aspen's leaves are
mute and still,

The wall-flower waves not on
the ruined hold,

Till, murmuring distant first,
then near and shrill,

The savage whirlwind wakes and
sweeps the groaning hill.

II

Artornish! such a silence sunk 10
Upon thy halls, when that gray
monk

His prophet-speech had spoke;
And his obedient brethren's sail
Was stretched to meet the south-
ern gale

Before a whisper woke.
Then murmuring sounds of doubt
and fear,

Close poured in many an anxious
ear,

The solemn stillness broke;
And still they gazed with eager
guess

Where in an oriel's deep recess 20
The Island Prince seemed bent to
press

What Lorn, by his impatient cheer
And gesture fierce, scarce deigned
to hear.

III

Starting at length with frowning
look,

His hand he clenched, his head he
shook,

And sternly flung apart:
'And deem'st thou me so mean of
mood

As to forget the mortal feud,
And clasp the hand with blood
imbrued 29

From my dear kinsman's heart?
Is this thy rede? — a due return
For ancient league and friendship
sworn!

But well our mountain proverb
shows

The faith of Islesmen ebbs and
flows.

Be it even so — believe ere long
He that now bears shall wreak the
wrong. —

Call Edith — call the Maid of
Lorn!

My sister, slaves! — for further
scorn,

Be sure nor she nor I will stay. —
Away, De Argentine, away! — 40

We nor ally nor brother know
In Bruce's friend or England's
foe.'

IV

But who the chieftain's rage can
tell
When, sought from lowest dun-
geon cell
To highest tower the castle round,
No Lady Edith was there found!
He shouted, 'Falsehood! — treach-
ery! —
Revenge and blood! — a lordly
meed
To him that will avenge the deed!
A baron's lands!' — His frantic
mood 50
Was scarcely by the news with-
stood
That Morag shared his sister's
flight,
And that in hurry of the night,
'Scaped noteless and without re-
mark,
Two strangers sought the abbot's
bark. —
'Man every galley! — fly — pur-
sue!
The priest his treachery shall rue!
Ay, and the time shall quickly
come
When we shall hear the thanks
that Rome
Will pay his feigned prophecy!' 60
Such was fierce Lorn's indignant
cry;
And Cormac Doil in haste obeyed,
Hoisted his sail, his anchor
weighed —
For, glad of each pretext for spoil,
A pirate sworn was Cormac Doil.
But others, lingering, spoke apart,
'The maid has given her maiden
heart
To Ronald of the Isles,
And, fearful lest her brother's
word 69
Bestow her on that English lord,
She seeks Iona's piles,
And wisely deems it best to dwell

A votaress in the holy cell
Until these feuds so fierce and
fell
The abbot reconciles.'

V

As, impotent of ire, the hall
Echoed to Lorn's impatient call —
'My horse, my mantle, and my
train!
Let none who honors Lorn re-
main!' —
Courteous but stern, a bold re-
quest 80
To Bruce De Argentine ex-
pressed:
'Lord Earl,' he said, 'I cannot
chuse
But yield such title to the Bruce,
Though name and earldom both
are gone
Since he braced rebel's armor
on —
But, earl or serf — rude phrase
was thine
Of late, and launched at Argen-
tine;
Such as compels me to demand
Redress of honor at thy hand.
We need not to each other tell 90
That both can wield their weapons
well;
Then do me but the soldier grace
This glove upon thy helm to place
Where we may meet in fight;
And I will say, as still I've said,
Though by ambition far misled,
Thou art a noble knight.'

VI

'And I,' the princely Bruce re-
plied,
'Might term it stain on knight-
hood's pride
That the bright sword of Argen-
tine 100
Should in a tyrant's quarrel shine;
But, for your brave request,
Be sure the honored pledge you
gave
In every battle-field shall wave

Upon my helmet-crest;
Believe that if my hasty tongue
Hath done thine honor causeless
wrong,

It shall be well redressed.
Not dearer to my soul was glove
Bestowed in youth by lady's love
Than this which thou hast
given! 111

Thus then my noble foe I greet;
Health and high fortune till we
meet,
And then — what pleases Hea-
ven.'

VII

Thus parted they — for now, with
sound
Like waves rolled back from rocky
ground,

The friends of Lorn retire;
Each mainland chieftain with his
train

Draws to his mountain towers
again,

Pondering how mortal schemes
prove vain 120

And mortal hopes expire.
But through the castle double
guard

By Ronald's charge kept wakeful
ward,

Wicket and gate were trebly
barred

By beam and bolt and chain;
Then of the guests in courteous
sort

He prayed excuse for mirth broke
short,

And bade them in Artornish fort
In confidence remain.

Now torch and menial tendance
led 130

Chieftain and knight to bower and
bed,

And beads were told and Aves
said,

And soon they sunk away
Into such sleep as wont to shed
Oblivion on the weary head
After a toilsome day.

VIII

But soon uproused, the monarch
cried

To Edward slumbering by his
side,

'Awake, or sleep for aye!
Even now there jarred a secret
door — 140

A taper-light gleams on the floor —
Up, Edward! up, I say!

Some one glides in like midnight
ghost —

Nay, strike not! 'tis our noble
host.'

Advancing then his taper's flame,
Ronald stept forth, and with him
came

Dunvegan's chief — each bent
the knee

To Bruce in sign of fealty
And proffered him his sword,
And hailed him in a monarch's
style 150

As king of mainland and of isle
And Scotland's rightful lord.

'And O,' said Ronald, 'Owned of
Heaven!

Say, is my erring youth forgiven,
By falsehood's arts from duty
driven,

Who rebel falchion drew,
Yet ever to thy deeds of fame,
Even while I strove against thy
claim,

Paid homage just and true?' —
'Alas! dear youth, the unhappy
time,' 160

Answered the Bruce, 'must bear
the crime

Since, guiltier far than you,
Even I' — he paused; for Falkirk's
woes

Upon his conscious soul arose.
The chieftain to his breast he
pressed,

And in a sigh concealed the rest.

IX

They proffered aid by arms and
might

To repossess him in his right;

But well their counsels must be
weighed
Ere banners raised and musters
made, 170
For English hire and Lorn's in-
trigues
Bound many chiefs in southern
leagues.
In answer Bruce his purpose bold
To his new vassals frankly told:
'The winter worn in exile o'er,
I longed for Carrick's kindred
shore.
I thought upon my native Ayr
And longed to see the burly fare
That Clifford makes, whose lordly
call
Now echoes through my father's
hall. 180
But first my course to Arran led
Where valiant Lennox gathers
head,
And on the sea by tempest tossed,
Our barks dispersed, our purpose
crossed,
Mine own, a hostile sail to shun,
Far from her destined course had
run,
When that wise will which masters
ours
Compelled us to your friendly
towers.'

X

Then Torquil spoke: 'The time
craves speed! 189
We must not linger in our deed,
But instant pray our sovereign
liege
To shun the perils of a siege.
The vengeful Lorn with all his
powers
Lies but too near Artornish tow-
ers,
And England's light-armed vessels
ride
Not distant far the waves of Clyde,
Prompt at these tidings to unmoor,
And sweep each strait and guard
each shore. 198
Then, till this fresh alarm pass by,

Secret and safe my liege must lie
In the far bounds of friendly Skye,
Torquil thy pilot and thy guide.'—
'Not so, brave chieftain,' Ronald
cried;
'Myself will on my sovereign wait,
And raise in arms the men of
Sleate,
Whilst thou, renowned where
chiefs debate,
Shalt sway their souls by council
sage
And awe them by thy locks of
age.'—
'And if my words in weight shall
fail,
This ponderous sword shall turn
the scale.' 210

XI

'The scheme,' said Bruce, 'con-
tents me well;
Meantime, 't were best that Isabel
For safety with my bark and crew
Again to friendly Erin drew.
There Edward too shall with her
wend,
In need to cheer her and defend
And muster up each scattered
friend.'
Here seemed it as Lord Ronald's
ear
Would other counsel gladlier hear;
But, all achieved as soon as
planned, 220
Both barks, in secret armed and
manned,
From out the haven bore;
On different voyage forth they ply,
This for the coast of winged Skye
And that for Erin's shore.

XII

With Bruce and Ronald bides the
tale.—
To favoring winds they gave the
sail
Till Mull's dark headlands scarce
they knew
And Ardnamurchan's hills were
blue.

But then the squalls blew close
 and hard, ²³⁰
 And, fain to strike the galley's
 yard
 And take them to the oar,
 With these rude seas in weary
 plight
 They strove the livelong day and
 night,
 Nor till the dawning had a sight
 Of Skye's romantic shore.
 Where Coolin stoops him to the
 west,
 They saw upon his shivered crest
 The sun's arising gleam;
 But such the labor and delay, ²⁴⁰
 Ere they were moored in Scavigh
 bay —
 For calmer heaven compelled to
 stay —
 He shot a western beam.
 Then Ronald said, 'If true mine
 eye,
 These are the savage wilds that
 lie
 North of Strathnardill and Dun-
 skye;
 No human foot comes here,
 And, since these adverse breezes
 blow,
 If my good liege love hunter's
 bow,
 What hinders that on land we
 go ²⁵⁰
 And strike a mountain-deer?
 Allan, my page, shall with us
 wend;
 A bow full deftly can he bend,
 And, if we meet a herd, may
 send
 A shaft shall mend our cheer.'
 Then each took bow and bolts in
 hand,
 Their row-boat launched and leapt
 to land,
 And left their skiff and train,
 Where a wild stream with head-
 long shock
 Came brawling down its bed of
 rock ²⁶⁰
 To mingle with the main.

XIII

Awhile their route they silent
 made,
 As men who stalk for mountain-
 deer,
 Till the good Bruce to Ronald
 said, —
 'Saint Mary! what a scene is
 here!
 I've traversed many a mountain-
 strand,
 Abroad and in my native land,
 And it has been my lot to tread
 Where safety more than pleasure
 led;
 Thus, many a waste I've wandered
 o'er, ²⁷⁰
 Clomb many a crag, crossed many
 a moor,
 But, by my halidome,
 A scene so rude, so wild as this,
 Yet so sublime in barrenness,
 Ne'er did my wandering footsteps
 press
 Where'er I hopped to roam.'

XIV

No marvel thus the monarch
 spake;
 For rarely human eye has known
 A scene so stern as that dread
 lake
 With its dark ledge of barren
 stone. ²⁸⁰
 Seems that primeval earthquake's
 sway
 Hath rent a strange and shattered
 way
 Through the rude bosom of the
 hill,
 And that each naked precipice,
 Sable ravine, and dark abyss,
 Tells of the outrage still.
 The wildest glen but this can show
 Some touch of Nature's genial
 glow;
 On high Benmore green mosses
 grow,
 And heath-bells bud in deep Glen-
 croe, ²⁹⁰
 And copse on Cruchan-Ben;

But here, — above, around, below,
 On mountain or in glen,
 Nor tree, nor shrub, nor plant, nor
 flower,
 Nor aught of vegetative power,
 The weary eye may ken.
 For all is rocks at random thrown,
 Black waves, bare crags, and banks
 of stone,
 As if were here denied
 The summer sun, the spring's
 sweet dew 300
 That clothe with many a varied
 hue
 The bleakest mountain-side.

XV

And wilder, forward as they wound,
 Were the proud cliffs and lake pro-
 found.
 Huge terraces of granite black
 Afforded rude and cumbered track;
 For from the mountain hoar,
 Hurl'd headlong in some night of
 fear,
 When yelled the wolf and fled the
 deer, 309
 Loose crags had toppled o'er;
 And some, chance-poised and bal-
 anced, lay
 So that a stripling arm might sway
 A mass no host could raise,
 In Nature's rage at random thrown
 Yet trembling like the Druid's
 stone
 On its precarious base.
 The evening mists with ceaseless
 change
 Now clothed the mountains' lofty
 range,
 Now left their foreheads bare,
 And round the skirts their mantle
 furled, 320
 Or on the sable waters curled,
 Or on the eddying breezes whirled,
 Dispersed in middle air.
 And oft condensed at once they
 lower
 When, brief and fierce, the moun-
 tain shower
 Pours like a torrent down,

And when return the sun's glad
 beams,
 Whitened with foam a thousand
 streams
 Leap from the mountain's crown.

XVI

'This lake,' said Bruce, 'whose bar-
 riers drear 330
 Are precipices sharp and sheer,
 Yielding no track for goat or
 deer
 Save the black shelves we tread,
 How term you its dark waves? and
 how
 Yon northern mountain's pathless
 brow,
 And yonder peak of dread
 That to the evening sun uplifts
 The griesly gulfs and slaty rifts
 Which seam its shivered
 head?' —
 'Coriskin call the dark lake's
 name, 340
 Coolin the ridge, as bards proclaim,
 From old Cuchullin, chief of fame.
 But bards, familiar in our isles
 Rather with Nature's frowns than
 smiles,
 Full oft their careless humors
 please
 By sportive names from scenes
 like these.
 I would old Torquil were to show
 His Maidens with their breasts of
 snow,
 Or that my noble liege were nigh
 To hear his Nurse sing lullaby! —
 The Maids — tall cliffs with break-
 ers white, 351
 The Nurse — a torrent's roaring
 might —
 Or that your eye could see the
 mood
 Of Corryvreckin's whirlpool rude,
 When dons the Hag her whitened
 hood —
 'Tis thus our islesmen's fancy
 frames
 For scenes so stern fantastic
 names.'

XVII

Answered the Bruce, 'And musing
 mind
 Might here a graver moral find.
 These mighty cliffs that heave on
 high 360
 Their naked brows to middle
 sky,
 Indifferent to the sun or snow,
 Where naught can fade and naught
 can blow,
 May they not mark a monarch's
 fate, —
 Raised high mid storms of strife
 and state,
 Beyond life's lowlier pleasures
 placed,
 His soul a rock, his heart a waste?
 O'er hope and love and fear aloft
 High rears his crowned head — But
 soft! 369
 Look, underneath yon jutting crag
 Are hunters and a slaughtered
 stag.
 Who may they be? But late you
 said
 No steps these desert regions
 tread?' —

XVIII

'So said I — and believed in sooth,'
 Ronald replied, 'I spoke the truth.
 Yet now I spy, by yonder stone,
 Five men — they mark us and
 come on;
 And by their badge on bonnet
 borne
 I guess them of the land of Lorn,
 Foes to my liege.' — 'So let it
 be; 380
 I've faced worse odds than five to
 three —
 But the poor page can little aid;
 Then be our battle thus arrayed,
 If our free passage they contest;
 Cope thou with two, I'll match
 the rest.' —
 'Not so, my liege — for, by my
 life,
 This sword shall meet the treble
 strife;

My strength, my skill in arms,
 more small,
 And less the loss should Ronald
 fall.
 But islesmen soon to soldiers
 grow, 390
 Allan has sword as well as bow,
 And were my monarch's order
 given,
 Two shafts should make our num-
 ber even.' —
 'No! not to save my life!' he
 said;
 'Enough of blood rests on my
 head
 Too rashly spilled — we soon shall
 know,
 Whether they come as friend or
 foe.'

XIX

Nigh came the strangers and more
 nigh; —
 Still less they pleased the mon-
 arch's eye.
 Men were they all of evil mien, 400
 Down-looked, unwilling to be seen;
 They moved with half-resolved
 pace,
 And bent on earth each gloomy
 face.
 The foremost two were fair ar-
 rayed
 With brogue and bonnet, trews
 and plaid,
 And bore the arms of mountain-
 eers,
 Daggers and broadswords, bows
 and spears.
 The three that lagged small space
 behind
 Seemed serfs of more degraded
 kind;
 Goat-skins or deer-hides o'er them
 cast 410
 Made a rude fence against the
 blast;
 Their arms and feet and heads
 were bare,
 Matted their beards, unshorn their
 hair;

For arms the caitiffs bore in hand
A club, an axe, a rusty brand.

XX

Onward still mutè, they kept the
track;

'Tell who ye be, or else stand
back,'

Said Bruce; 'in deserts when they
meet,

Men pass not as in peaceful street.'
Still at his stern command they
stood, 42°

And proffered greeting brief and
rude,

But acted courtesy so ill
As seemed of fear and not of will.

'Wanderers we are, as you may
be;

Men hither driven by wind and sea,
Who, if you list to taste our cheer,
Will share with you this fallow
deer.' —

'If from the sea, where lies your
bark?' —

'Ten fathom deep in ocean dark!
Wrecked yesternight: but we are
men 43°

Who little sense of peril ken.
The shades come down—the day
is shut —

Will you go with us to our
hut?' —

'Our vessel waits us in the bay;
Thanks for your proffer—have
good-day.' —

'Was that your galley, then, which
rode

Not far from shore when evening
glowed?' —

'It was,'— 'Then spare your need-
less pain,

There will she now be sought in
vain.

We saw her from the mountain
head 44°

When, with Saint George's blazon
red

A southern vessel bore in sight,
And yours raised sail and took to
flight.' —

XXI

'Now, by the rood, unwelcome
news!'

Thus with Lord Ronald communed
Bruce;

'Nor rests there light enough to
show

If this their tale be true or no.

The men seem bred of churlish
kind,

Yet mellow nuts have hardest
rind;

We will go with them—food and
fire 45°

And sheltering roof our wants re-
quire.

Sure guard 'gainst treachery will
we keep,

And watch by turns our comrades'
sleep. —

Good fellows, thanks; your guests
we'll be.

And well will pay the courtesy.

Come, lead us where your lodging
lies —

Nay, soft! we mix not compa-
nies. —

Show us the path o'er crag and
stone,

And we will follow you;— lead
on.'

XXII

They reached the dreary cabin,
made 46°

Of sails against a rock displayed,
And there on entering found

A slender boy, whose form and
mien

Ill suited with such savage scene,
In cap and cloak of velvet green,

Low seated on the ground.

His garb was such as minstrels
wear,

Dark was his hue, and dark his
hair,

His youthful cheek was marred by
care,

His eyes in sorrow drowned. 47°
'Whence this poor boy?'—As
Ronald spoke,

The voice his trance of anguish
broke;
As if awaked from ghastly dream,
He raised his head with start and
scream,
And wildly gazed around;
Then to the wall his face he turned,
And his dark neck with blushes
burned.

XXIII

'Whose is the boy?' again he said,
'By chance of war our captive
made;
He may be yours, if you should
hold ⁴⁸⁰
That music has more charms than
gold;
For, though from earliest child-
hood mute,
The lad can deftly touch the lute,
And on the rote and viol play,
And well can drive the time away
For those who love such glee;
For me the favoring breeze,
when loud
It pipes upon the galley's
shroud,
Makes blither melody.' —
'Hath he, then, sense of spoken
sound?' — ⁴⁹⁰
'Ay; so his mother bade us
know,
A crone in our late shipwreck
drowned,
And hence the silly stripling's
woe.
More of the youth I cannot say,
Our captive but since yesterday;
When wind and weather waxed so
grim,
We little listed think of him. —
But why waste time in idle words?
Sit to your cheer — unbelt your
swords.'
Sudden the captive turned his
head, ⁵⁰⁰
And one quick glance to Ronald
sped.
It was a keen and warning look,
And well the chief the signal took.

XXIV

'Kind host,' he said, 'our needs re-
quire
A separate board and separate
fire;
For know that on a pilgrimage
Wend I, my comrade, and this
page.
And, sworn to vigil and to fast
Long as this hallowed task shall
last,
We never doff the plaid or
sword, ⁵¹⁰
Or feast us at a stranger's board,
And never share one common
sleep,
But one must still his vigil keep.
Thus, for our separate use, good
friend,
We'll hold this hut's remoter
end.' —
'A churlish vow,' the elder said,
'And hard, methinks, to be obeyed.
How say you, if, to wreak the
scorn
That pays our kindness harsh re-
turn,
We should refuse to share our
meal?' — ⁵²⁰
'Then say we that our swords are
steel!
And our vow binds us not to
fast
Where gold or force may buy re-
past.' —
Their host's dark brow grew keen
and fell,
His teeth are clenched, his features
swell;
Yet sunk the felon's moody ire
Before Lord Ronald's glance of
fire,
Nor could his craven courage brook
The monarch's calm and dauntless
look.
With laugh constrained — 'Let
every man ⁵³⁰
Follow the fashion of his clan!
Each to his separate quarters
keep,
And feed or fast, or wake or sleep.'

XXV

Their fire at separate distance
burns,
By turns they eat, keep guard by
turns;
For evil seemed that old man's
eye,
Dark and designing, fierce yet shy.
Still he avoided forward look,
But slow and circumspectly took
A circling, never-ceasing glance,
By doubt and cunning marked at
once, 541
Which shot a mischief-boding
ray
From under eyebrows shagged and
gray.
The younger, too, who seemed his
son,
Had that dark look the timid
shun;
The half-clad serfs behind them
sate,
And scowled a glare 'twixt fear
and hate —
Till all, as darkness onward crept,
Couched down, and seemed to
sleep or slept.
Nor he, that boy, whose powerless
tongue 550
Must trust his eyes to wail his
wrong,
A longer watch of sorrow made,
But stretched his limbs to slumber
laid.

XXVI

Not in his dangerous host confides
The king, but wary watch pro-
vides.
Ronald keeps ward till midnight
past,
Then wakes the king, young Allan
last;
Thus ranked, to give the youthful
page
The rest required by tender age.
What is Lord Ronald's wakeful
thought 560
To chase the languor toil had
brought? —

For deem not that he deigned to
throw
Much care upon such coward
foe —
He thinks of lovely Isabel
When at her foeman's feet she fell,
Nor less when, placed in princely
selle,
She glanced on him with favoring
eyes
At Woodstock when he won the
prize.
Nor, fair in joy, in sorrow fair, 569
In pride of place as mid despair,
Must she alone engross his care.
His thoughts to his betrothed
bride,
To Edith, turn — O, how decide,
When here his love and heart are
given,
And there his faith stands plight
to Heaven!
No drowsy ward 't is his to keep,
For seldom lovers long for sleep.
Till sung his midnight hymn the
owl,
Answered the dog-fox with his
howl,
Then waked the king — at his re-
quest, 580
Lord Ronald stretched himself to
rest.

XXVII

What spell was good King Rob-
ert's, say,
To drive the weary night away?
His was the patriot's burning
thought
Of freedom's battle bravely fought,
Of castles stormed, of cities freed,
Of deep design and daring deed,
Of England's roses reft and torn,
And Scotland's cross in triumph
worn,
Of rout and rally, war and truce, —
As heroes think, so thought the
Bruce. 591
No marvel, mid such musings high
Sleep shunned the monarch's
thoughtful eye.

Now over Coolin's eastern head
 The grayish light begins to spread,
 The otter to his cavern drew,
 And clamored shrill the wakening
 mew;
 Then watched the page — to need-
 ful rest
 The king resigned his anxious
 breast.

XXVIII

To Allan's eyes was harder task
 The weary watch their safeties
 ask. 601
 He trimmed the fire and gave to
 shine
 With bickering light the splintered
 pine;
 Then gazed awhile where silent
 laid
 Their hosts were shrouded by the
 plaid.
 But little fear waked in his mind,
 For he was bred of martial kind,
 And, if to manhood he arrive,
 May match the boldest knight
 alive.
 Then thought he of his mother's
 tower, 610
 His little sister's greenwood
 bower,
 How there the Easter-gambols
 pass,
 And of Dan Joseph's lengthened
 mass.
 But still before his weary eye
 In rays prolonged the blazes die —
 Again he roused him — on the lake
 Looked forth where now the twi-
 light-flake
 Of pale cold dawn began to wake.
 On Coolin's cliffs the mist lay
 furled,
 The morning breeze the lake had
 curled, 620
 The short dark waves, heaved to
 the land,
 With ceaseless plash kissed cliff
 or sand; —
 It was a slumbrous sound — he
 turned

To tales at which his youth had
 burned,
 Of pilgrim's path by demon
 crossed,
 Of sprightly elf or yelling ghost,
 Of the wild witch's baneful cot,
 And mermaid's alabaster grot,
 Who bathes her limbs in sunless
 well
 Deep in Strathaird's enchanted
 cell. 630
 Thither in fancy rapt he flies,
 And on his sight the vaults arise;
 That hut's dark walls he sees no
 more,
 His foot is on the marble floor,
 And o'er his head the dazzling
 spars
 Gleam like a firmament of stars! —
 Hark! hears he not the sea-nymph
 speak
 Her anger in that thrilling
 shriek! —
 No! all too late, with Allan's
 dream
 Mingled the captive's warning
 scream. 640
 As from the ground he strives to
 start,
 A ruffian's dagger finds his heart!
 Upwards he casts his dizzy eyes —
 Murmurs his master's name — and
 dies!

XXIX

Not so awoke the king! his hand
 Snatched from the flame a knotted
 brand,
 The nearest weapon of his wrath;
 With this he crossed the murder-
 er's path
 And venged young Allan well!
 The spattered brain and bubbling
 blood 650
 Hissed on the half-extinguished
 wood,
 The miscreant gasped and fell!
 Nor rose in peace the Island Lord;
 One caitiff died upon his sword,
 And one beneath his grasp lies
 prone

In mortal grapple overthrown.
But while Lord Ronald's dagger
drank

The life-blood from his panting
flank,

The father-ruffian of the band
Behind him rears a coward hand!—

O for a moment's aid, 661
Till Bruce, who deals no double
blow,

Dash to the earth another foe,
Above his comrade laid!—

And it is gained—the captive
sprung

On the raised arm and closely
clung,

And, ere he shook him loose,
The mastered felon pressed the
ground,

And gasped beneath a mortal
wound, 669

While o'er him stands the Bruce.

XXX

'Miscreant! while lasts thy flitting
spark,

Give me to know the purpose
dark

That armed thy hand with mur-
derous knife

Against offenceless stranger's
life?'—

'No stranger thou!' with accent
fell,

Murmured the wretch; 'I know
thee well,

And know thee for the foeman
sworn

Of my high chief, the mighty
Lorn.'—

'Speak yet again, and speak the
truth

For thy soul's sake!—from whence
this youth? 680

His country, birth, and name de-
clare,

And thus one evil deed repair.'—
'Vex me no more!—my blood

runs cold—
No more I know than I have
told.

We found him in a bark we sought
With different purpose—and I
thought'—

Fate cut him short; in blood and
broil,

As he had lived, died Cormac Doil.

XXXI

Then resting on his bloody blade,
The valiant Bruce to Ronald said,
'Now shame upon us both!—that
boy 691

Lifts his mute face to heaven
And clasps his hands, to testify
His gratitude to God on high

For strange deliverance given.
His speechless gesture thanks
hath paid,

Which our free tongues have left
unsaid!'

He raised the youth with kindly
word,

But marked him shudder at the
sword:

He cleansed it from its hue of
death, 700

And plunged the weapon in its
sheath.

'Alas, poor child! unfitting part
Fate doomed when with so soft a
heart

And form so slight as thine
She made thee first a pirate's
slave,

Then in his stead a patron gave
Of wayward lot like mine;

A landless prince, whose wander-
ing life

Is but one scene of blood and
strife—

Yet scant of friends the Bruce
shall be, 710

But he'll find resting-place for
thee.—

Come, noble Ronald! o'er the
dead

Enough thy generous grief is paid,
And well has Allan's fate been
wroke;

Come, wend we hence—the day
has broke.

Seek we our bark — I trust the
tale
Was false that she had hoisted
sail.'

XXXII

Yet, ere they left that charnel-cell,
The Island Lord bade sad fare-
well

To Allan: 'Who shall tell this
tale,' ⁷²⁰

He said, 'in halls of Donagaile?
O, who his widowed mother tell
That, ere his bloom, her fairest
fell?—

Rest thee, poor youth! and trust
my care

For mass and knell and funeral
prayer;

While o'er those caitiffs where
they lie

The wolf shall snarl, the raven
cry!'

And now the eastern mountain's
head

On the dark lake threw lustre red;
Bright gleams of gold and purple
streak ⁷³⁰

Ravine and precipice and peak —
So earthly power at distance
shows;

Reveals his splendor, hides his
woes.

O'er sheets of granite, dark and
broad,

Rent and unequal, lay the road.

In sad discourse the warriors
wind,

And the mute captive moves be-
hind.

CANTO FOURTH

I

STRANGER! if e'er thine ardent
step hath traced

The northern realms of ancient
Caledon,

Where the proud Queen of Wil-
derness hath placed

By lake and cataract her lonely
throne,

Sublime but sad delight thy soul
hath known,

Gazing on pathless glen and
mountain high,

Listing where from the cliffs the
torrents thrown

Mingle their echoes with the
eagle's cry,

And with the sounding lake and
with the moaning sky.

Yes! 't was sublime, but sad. —
The loneliness ¹⁰

Loaded thy heart, the desert
tired thine eye;

And strange and awful fears be-
gan to press

Thy bosom with a stern solem-
nity.

Then hast thou wished some
woodman's cottage nigh,

Something that showed of life,
though low and mean;

Glad sight, its curling wreath of
smoke to spy,

Glad sound, its cock's blithe
carol would have been,

Or children whooping wild beneath
the willows green.

Such are the scenes where sav-
age grandeur wakes

An awful thrill that softens into
sighs; ²⁰

Such feelings rouse them by dim
Rannoch's lakes,

In dark Glencoe such gloomy
raptures rise:

Or farther, where beneath the
northern skies

Chides wild Loch-Eribol his cav-
erns hoar —

But, be the minstrel judge, they
yield the prize

Of desert dignity to that dread
shore

That sees grim Coolin rise and
hears Coriskin roar.

II

Through such wild scenes the
champion passed,
When bold halloo and bugle-blast
Upon the breeze came loud and
fast. 30

'There,' said the Bruce, 'rung Ed-
ward's horn !

What can have caused such brief
return?

And see, brave Ronald, — see him
dart

O'er stock and stone like hunted
hart,

Precipitate, as is the use,
In war or sport, of Edward Bruce.
He marks us, and his eager cry
Will tell his news ere he be nigh.'

III

Loud Edward shouts, 'What
make ye here, 39

Warring upon the mountain-deer,
When Scotland wants her king?

A bark from Lennox crossed our
track,

With her in speed I hurried back,
These joyful news to bring —

The Stuart stirs in Teviotdale,
And Douglas wakes his native
vale ;

Thy storm-tossed fleet hath won
its way

With little loss to Brodick-Bay,
And Lennox with a gallant band
Waits but thy coming and com-
mand 50

To waft them o'er to Carrick
strand.

There are blithe news! — but mark
the close !

Edward, the deadliest of our foes,
As with his host he northward
passed,

Hath on the borders breathed his
last.'

IV

Still stood the Bruce — his steady
cheek

Was little wont his joy to speak,

But then his color rose : —

'Now, Scotland! shortly shalt thou
see,

With God's high will, thy children
free 60

And vengeance on thy foes !

Yet to no sense of selfish wrongs,
Bear witness with me, Heaven, be-
longs

My joy o'er Edward's bier ;
I took my knighthood at his hand,
And lordship held of him and land,

And well may vouch it here,
That, blot the story from his page
Of Scotland ruined in his rage,
You read a monarch brave and
sage 70

And to his people dear.' —

'Let London's burghers mourn her
lord

And Croydon monks his praise re-
cord,'

The eager Edward said ;

'Eternal as his own, my hate
Surmounts the bounds of mortal
fate

And dies not with the dead !
Such hate was his on Solway's
strand

When vengeance clenched his pal-
sied hand, 79

That pointed yet to Scotland's land,
As his last accents prayed
Disgrace and curse upon his heir
If he one Scottish head should
spare

Till stretched upon the bloody lair
Each rebel corpse was laid !
Such hate was his when his last
breath

Renounced the peaceful house of
death,

And bade his bones to Scotland's
coast

Be borne by his remorseless host,
As if his dead and stony eye 90
Could still enjoy her misery !

Such hate was his — dark, deadly,
long ;

Mine — as enduring, deep, and
strong!' —

V

'Let women, Edward, war with words,
 With curses monks, but men with swords:
 Nor doubt of living foes to sate
 Deepest revenge and deadliest hate.
 Now to the sea! Behold the beach,
 And see the galley's pendants stretch
 Their fluttering length down favor-
 ing gale! 100
 Aboard, aboard! and hoist the sail,
 Hold we our way for Arran first,
 Where meet in arms our friends
 dispersed;
 Lennox the loyal, De la Haye,
 And Boyd the bold in battle
 fray.
 I long the hardy band to head,
 And see once more my standard
 spread.—
 Does noble Ronald share our
 course,
 Or stay to raise his island
 force?'—
 'Come weal, come woe, by Bruce's
 side,' 110
 Replied the chief, 'will Ronald
 bide.
 And since two galleys yonder ride,
 Be mine, so please my liege, dis-
 missed
 To wake to arms the clans of
 Uist,
 And all who hear the Minche's
 roar
 On the Long Island's lonely shore,
 The nearer Isles with slight
 delay
 Ourselves may summon in our
 way;
 And soon on Arran's shore shall
 meet 119
 With Torquil's aid a gallant fleet,
 If aught avails their chieftain's
 hest
 Among the islesmen of the west.'

VI

Thus was their venturous council
 said.
 But, ere their sails the galleys
 spread,
 Coriskin dark and Coolin high
 Echoed the dirge's doleful cry.
 Along that sable lake passed
 slow—
 Fit scene for such a sight of woe—
 The sorrowing islesmen as they
 bore 129
 The murdered Allan to the shore.
 At every pause with dismal shout
 Their coronach of grief rung out,
 And ever when they moved again
 The pipes resumed their clamor-
 ous strain,
 And with the pibroch's shrilling
 wail
 Mourned the young heir of Dona-
 gaille.
 Round and around, from cliff and
 cave
 His answer stern old Coolin gave,
 Till high upon his misty side
 Languished the mournful notes
 and died. 140
 For never sounds by mortal made
 Attained his high and haggard
 head,
 That echoes but the tempest's
 moan
 Or the deep thunder's rending
 groan.

VII

Merrily, merrily bounds the bark,
 She bounds before the gale,
 The mountain breeze from Ben-na-
 darch
 Is joyous in her sail!
 With fluttering sound like laughter
 hoarse
 The cords and canvas strain, 150
 The waves, divided by her force,
 In rippling eddies chased her
 course,
 As if they laughed again.
 Not down the breeze more blithely
 flew,

Skimming the wave, the light sea-
mew

Than the gay galley bore
Her course upon that favoring
wind,

And Coolin's crest has sunk be-
hind

And Slapin's caverned shore.
'T was then that warlike signals
wake 160

Dunscraith's dark towers and Eis-
ord's lake,

And soon from Cavilgarrigh's head
Thick wreaths of eddying smoke
were spread;

A summons these of war and
wrath

To the brave clans of Sleat and
Strath,

And ready at the sight
Each warrior to his weapon
sprung

And targe upon his shoulder flung,
Impatient for the fight.

Mac-Kinnon's chief, in warfare
gray, 170

Had charge to muster their array
And guide their barks to Brodick-
Bay.

VIII

Signal of Ronald's high command,
A beacon gleamed o'er sea and
land

From Canna's tower, that, steep
and gray,

Like falcon-nest o'erhangs the
bay.

Seek not the giddy crag to climb
To view the turret scathed by
time;

It is a task of doubt and fear
To aught but goat or mountain-
deer. 180

But rest thee on the silver
beach

And let the aged herdsman teach
His tale of former day;

His cur's wild clamor he shall
chide,

And for thy seat by ocean's side

His varied plaid display;
Then tell how with their chief-
tain came

In ancient times a foreign dame
To yonder turret gray.

Stern was her lord's suspicious
mind 190

Who in so rude a jail confined
So soft and fair a thrall!

And oft when moon on ocean slept
That lovely lady sate and wept

Upon the castle-wall,
And turned her eye to southern
climes,

And thought perchance of happier
times,

And touched her lute by fits, and
sung

Wild ditties in her native tongue.
And still, when on the cliff and
bay 200

Placid and pale the moonbeams
play

And every breeze is mute,
Upon the lone Hebridean's ear

Steals a strange pleasure mixed
with fear,

While from that cliff he seems to
hear

The murmur of a lute
And sounds as of a captive lone

That mourns her woes in tongue
unknown.—

Strange is the tale—but all too
long

Already hath it staid the song—
Yet who may pass them by, 211

That crag and tower in ruins gray,
Nor to their hapless tenant pay

The tribute of a sigh?

IX

Merrily, merrily bounds the bark
O'er the broad ocean driven,

Her path by Ronin's mountains
dark

The steersman's hand hath
given.

And Ronin's mountains dark have
sent

Their hunters to the shore, 220

And each his ashen bow unbent,
 And gave his pastime o'er,
 And at the Island Lord's command
 For hunting spear took warrior's
 brand.

On Scooreigg next a warning light
 Summoned her warriors to the
 fight;

A numerous race ere stern Mac-
 Leod

O'er their bleak shores in ven-
 geance strode,

When all in vain the ocean-cave
 Its refuge to his victims gave. ²³⁰

The chief, relentless in his wrath,
 With blazing heath blockades the
 path;

In dense and stifling volumes
 rolled,

The vapor filled the caverned
 hold!

The warrior-threat, the infant's
 plain,

The mother's screams, were heard
 in vain;

The vengeful chief maintains his
 fires

Till in the vault a tribe expires!

The bones which strew that cav-
 ern's gloom ²³⁹

Too well attest their dismal doom.

X

Merrily, merrily goes the bark

On a breeze from the northward
 free,

So shoots through the morning
 sky the lark,

Or the swan through the sum-
 mer sea.

The shores of Mull on the east-
 ward lay,

And Ulva dark and Colonsay,

And all the group of islets gay

That guard famed Staffa round.

Then all unknown its columns
 rose

Where dark and undisturbed re-
 pose ²⁵⁰

The cormorant had found,

And the shy seal had quiet home

And weltered in that wondrous
 dome

Where, as to shame the temples
 decked

By skill of earthly architect,
 Nature herself, it seemed, would
 raise

A minster to her Maker's praise!

Not for a meaner use ascend

Her columns or her arches bend;

Nor of a theme less solemn tells

That mighty surge that ebbs and
 swells, ²⁶¹

And still, between each awful
 pause,

From the high vault an answer
 draws

In varied tone prolonged and high
 That mocks the organ's melody.

Nor doth its entrance front in
 vain

To old Iona's holy fane,

That Nature's voice might seem
 to say,

'Well hast thou done, frail child
 of clay!

Thy humble powers that stately
 shrine ²⁷⁰

Tasked high and hard — but wit-
 ness mine!'

XI

Merrily, merrily goes the bark,

Before the gale she bounds;

So darts the dolphin from the
 shark,

Or the deer before the hounds.

They left Loch-Tua on their lee,

And they wakened the men of the
 wild Tiree,

And the chief of the sandy Coll;

They paused not at Columba's
 isle,

Though pealed the bells from the
 holy pile ²⁸⁰

With long and measured toll;

No time for matin or for mass,

And the sounds of the holy sum-
 mons pass

Away in the billows' roll.

Lochbuie's fierce and warlike lord

Their signal saw and grasped his sword,

And verdant Islay called her host,
And the clans of Jura's rugged coast

Lord Ronald's call obey,
And Scarba's isle, whose tortured shore

Still rings to Corrievreken's roar,
And lonely Colonsay;—
Scenes sung by him who sings no more!

His bright and brief career is o'er,

And mute his tuneful strains;
Quenched is his lamp of varied lore

That loved the light of song to pour;

A distant and a deadly shore
Has LEYDEN'S cold remains!

XII

Ever the breeze blows merrily,³⁰⁰
But the galley ploughs no more the sea.

Lest, rounding wild Cantyre, they meet

The southern foeman's watchful fleet,

They held unwonted way;
Up Tarbat's western lake they bore,

Then dragged their bark the isthmus o'er,

As far as Kilmaconnel's shore
Upon the eastern bay.

It was a wondrous sight to see³⁰⁹
Topmast and pennon glitter free,
High raised above the greenwood tree,

As on dry land the galley moves
By cliff and copse and alder groves.
Deep import from that selcouth sign

Did many a mountain seer divine,
For ancient legends told the Gael
That when a royal bark should sail

O'er Kilmaconnel moss
Old Albyn should in fight prevail,

And every foe should faint and quail³²⁰
Before her silver Cross.

XIII

Now launched once more, the inland sea

They furrow with fair augury,
And steer for Arran's isle:
The sun, ere yet he sunk behind
Ben-Ghoil, 'the Mountain of the Wind,'

Gave his grim peaks a greeting kind,

And bade Loch Ranza smile.
Thither their destined course they drew;

It seemed the isle her monarch knew,³³⁰

So brilliant was the landward view,
The ocean so serene;

Each puny wave in diamonds rolled

O'er the calm deep where hues of gold

With azure strove and green.
The hill, the vale, the tree, the tower,

Glowed with the tints of evening's hour,

The beach was silver sheen,
The wind breathed soft as lover's sigh,³³⁹

And oft renewed seemed oft to die,

With breathless pause between.
O, who with speech of war and woes

Would wish to break the soft repose

Of such enchanting scene?

XIV

Is it of war Lord Ronald speaks?
The blush that dyes his manly cheeks,

The timid look, and downcast eye,
And faltering voice the theme deny.

And good King Robert's brow expressed

He pondered o'er some high re-
 quest, 350
 As doubtful to approve;
 Yet in his eye and lip the while,
 Dwelt the half-pitying glance
 and smile
 Which manhood's graver mood
 beguile
 When lovers talk of love.
 Anxious his suit Lord Ronald pled;
 'And for my bride betrothed,' he
 said,
 'My liege has heard the rumor
 spread
 Of Edith from Artornish fled.
 Too hard her fate — I claim no
 right 360
 To blame her for her hasty flight;
 Be joy and happiness her lot! —
 But she hath fled the bridal-knot,
 And Lorn recalled his promised
 plight
 In the assembled chieftains'
 sight. —
 When, to fulfil our fathers' band
 I proffered all I could — my
 hand —
 I was repulsed with scorn;
 Mine honor I should ill assert,
 And worse the feelings of my
 heart, 370
 If I should play a suitor's part
 Again to pleasure Lorn.'

XV

'Young Lord,' the royal Bruce re-
 plied,
 'That question must the Church
 decide;
 Yet seems it hard, since rumors
 state
 Edith takes Clifford for her mate,
 The very tie which she hath broke
 To thee should still be binding
 yoke.
 But, for my sister Isabel — 379
 The mood of woman who can tell?
 I guess the Champion of the Rock,
 Victorious in the tourney shock,
 That knight unknown to whom the
 prize

She dealt, — had favor in her eyes;
 But since our brother Nigel's fate,
 Our ruined house and hapless state,
 From worldly joy and hope es-
 tranged,
 Much is the hapless mourner
 changed.
 Perchance, here smiled the noble
 King,
 'This tale may other musings
 bring. 390
 Soon shall we know — yon moun-
 tains hide
 The little convent of Saint Bride;
 There, sent by Edward, she must
 stay
 Till fate shall give more prosper-
 ous day;
 And thither will I bear thy suit,
 Nor will thine advocate be mute.'

XVI

As thus they talked in earnest
 mood,
 That speechless boy beside them
 stood.
 He stooped his head against the
 mast,
 And bitter sobs came thick and
 fast, 400
 A grief that would not be repressed
 But seemed to burst his youthful
 breast.
 His hands against his forehead
 held
 As if by force his tears repelled,
 But through his fingers long and
 slight
 Fast trilled the drops of crystal
 bright.
 Edward, who walked the deck
 apart,
 First spied this conflict of the
 heart.
 Thoughtless as brave, with blunt-
 ness kind
 He sought to cheer the sorrower's
 mind; 410
 By force the slender hand he drew
 From those pooreyes that streamed
 with dew.

As in his hold the stripling strove—
'T was a rough grasp, though
meant in love—

Away his tears the warrior swept,
And bade shame on him that he
wept.

'I would to Heaven thy helpless
tongue

Could tell me who hath wrought
thee wrong!

For, were he of our crew the best,
The insult went not unredressed.
Come, cheer thee; thou art now of
age 421

To be a warrior's gallant page;
Thou shalt be mine!—a palfrey
fair

O'er hill and holt my boy shall
bear,

To hold my bow in hunting grove,
Or speed on errand to my love;
For well I wot thou wilt not tell
The temple where my wishes
dwell.'

XVII

Bruce interposed, 'Gay Edward,
no, 429

This is no youth to hold thy bow,
To fill thy goblet, or to bear
Thy message light to lighter fair.
Thou art a patron all too wild
And thoughtless for this orphan
child.

See'st thou not how apart he steals,
Keeps lonely couch, and lonely
meals?

Fitter by far in yon calm cell
To tend our sister Isabel,
With father Augustine to share
The peaceful change of convent
prayer, 440

Than wander wild adventures
through

With such a reckless guide as
you.'—

'Thanks, brother!' Edward an-
swered gay,

'For the high laud thy words con-
vey!

But we may learn some future day,

If thou or I can this poor boy
Protect the best or best employ.
Meanwhile, our vessel nears the
strand;
Launch we the boat and seek the
land.'

XVIII

To land King Robert lightly
sprung, 450

And thrice aloud his bugle rung
With note prolonged and varied
strain

Till bold Ben-Ghoil replied again.
Good Douglas then and De la
Haye

Had in a glen a hart at bay,
And Lennox cheered the laggard
hounds,

When waked that horn the green-
wood bounds.

'It is the foe!' cried Boyd, who
came

In breathless haste with eye of
flame, — 459

'It is the foe! — Each valiant lord
Fling by his bow and grasp his
sword!'

'Not so,' replied the good Lord
James,

'That blast no English bugle
claims.

Oft have I heard it fire the fight,
Cheer the pursuit, or stop the
flight.

Dead were my heart and deaf mine
ear,

If Bruce should call nor Douglas
hear!

Each to Loch Ranza's margin
spring;

That blast was winded by the
king!'

XIX

Fast to their mates the tidings
spread, 470

And fast to shore the warriors
sped.

Bursting from glen and greenwood
tree,

High waked their loyal jubilee!
 Around the royal Bruce they
 crowd,
 And clasped his hands, and wept
 aloud.
 Veterans of early fields were there,
 Whose helmets pressed their hoary
 hair,
 Whose swords and axes bore a
 stain
 From life-blood of the red-haired
 Dane;
 And boys whose hands scarce
 brook'd to wield 480
 The heavy sword or bossy shield.
 Men too were there that bore the
 scars
 Impressed in Albyn's woful wars,
 At Falkirk's fierce and fatal fight,
 Teyndrum's dread rout, and Meth-
 ven's flight;
 The might of Douglas there was
 seen,
 There Lennox with his graceful
 mien;
 Kirkpatrick, Closeburn's dreaded
 Knight;
 The Lindsay, fiery, fierce, and
 light; 489
 The heir of murdered De la Haye,
 And Boyd the grave, and Seton
 gay.
 Around their king regained they
 pressed,
 Wept, shouted, clasped him to
 their breast,
 And young and old, and serf and
 lord,
 And he who ne'er unsheathed a
 sword,
 And he in many a peril tried,
 Alike resolved the brunt to bide,
 And live or die by Bruce's side!

XX

O War! thou hast thy fierce de-
 light,
 Thy gleams of joy, intensely
 bright! 500
 Such gleams as from thy polished
 shield

Fly dazzling o'er the battle-field!
 Such transports wake, severe and
 high,
 Amid the pealing conquest cry;
 Scarce less, when after battle lost
 Muster the remnants of a host,
 And as each comrade's name they
 tell
 Who in the well-fought conflict
 fell,
 Knitting stern brow o'er flashing
 eye, 509
 Vow to avenge them or to die!—
 Warriors!—and where are war-
 riors found,
 If not on martial Britain's ground?
 And who, when waked with note
 of fire,
 Love more than they the British
 lyre?—
 Know ye not,— hearts to honor
 dear!
 That joy, deep-thrilling, stern, se-
 vere,
 At which the heartstrings vibrate
 high,
 And wake the fountains of the eye?
 And blame ye then the Bruce if
 trace
 Of tear is on his manly face 520
 When, scanty relics of the train
 That hailed at Scone his early
 reign,
 This patriot band around him
 hung,
 And to his knees and bosom
 clung?—
 Blame ye the Bruce?— His bro-
 ther blamed,
 But shared the weakness, while
 ashamed
 With haughty laugh his head he
 turned,
 And dashed away the tear he
 scorned.

XXI

'T is morning, and the convent bell
 Long time had ceased its matin
 knell 530
 Within thy walls, Saint Bride!

An aged sister sought the cell
Assigned to Lady Isabel,
And hurriedly she cried,
'Haste, gentle Lady, haste! —
there waits
A noble stranger at the gates;
Saint Bride's poor votaress ne'er
has seen
A knight of such a princely mien;
His errand, as he bade me tell,
Is with the Lady Isabel.' 540
The princess rose, — for on her
knee
Low bent she told her rosary, —
'Let him by thee his purpose
teach;
I may not give a stranger
speech.' —
'Saint Bride forefend, thou royal
maid!'
The portress crossed herself and
said,
'Not to be Prioress might I
Debate his will, his suit deny.' —
'Has earthly show then, simple
fool,
Power o'er a sister of thy rule? 550
And art thou, like the worldly
train,
Subdued by splendors light and
vain?'

XXII

'No, lady! in old eyes like mine,
Gauds have no glitter, gems no
shine;
Nor grace his rank attendants
vain,
One youthful page is all his train.
It is the form, the eye, the word,
The bearing of that stranger lord;
His stature, manly, bold, and tall,
Built like a castle's battled wall,
Yet moulded in such just degrees,
His giant-strength seems light-
some ease. 562
Close as the tendrils of the vine
His locks upon his forehead twine,
Jet-black save where some touch
of gray
Has ta'en the youthful hue away.

Weather and war their rougher
trace
Have left on that majestic face; —
But 't is his dignity of eye! 569
There, if a suppliant, would I
fly,
Secure, mid danger, wrongs, and
grief,
Of sympathy, redress, relief —
That glance, if guilty, would I
dread
More than the doom that spoke me
dead!'
'Enough, enough,' the Princess
cried,
'T is Scotland's hope, her joy,
her pride!
To meaner front was ne'er as-
signed
Such mastery o'er the common
mind —
Bestowed thy high designs to
aid,
How long, O Heaven! how long
delayed! — 580
Haste, Mona, haste, to introduce
My darling brother, royal Bruce!'

XXIII

They met like friends who part in
pain,
And meet in doubtful hope again.
But when subdued that fitful swell,
The Bruce surveyed the humble
cell —
'And this is thine, poor Isabel! —
That pallet-couch and naked wall,
For room of state and bed of pall;
For costly robes and jewels rare,
A string of beads and zone of
hair; 591
And for the trumpet's sprightly
call
To sport or banquet, grove or hall,
The bell's grim voice divides thy
care,
'Twixt hours of penitence and
prayer! —
O ill for thee, my royal claim
From the First David's sainted
name!

O woe for thee, that while he
sought
His right, thy brother feebly
fought !'

XXIV

'Now lay these vain regrets aside,
And be the unshaken Bruce !' she
cried ; 601
'For more I glory to have shared
The woes thy venturous spirit
dared,
When raising first thy valiant band
In rescue of thy native land,
Than had fair Fortune set me
down
The partner of an empire's crown.
And grieve not that on pleasure's
stream
No more I drive in giddy dream,
For Heaven the erring pilot
knew, 610
And from the gulf the vessel drew,
Tried me with judgments stern
and great,
My house's ruin, thy defeat,
Poor Nigel's death, till tamed I own
My hopes are fixed on Heaven
alone ;
Nor e'er shall earthly prospects
win
My heart to this vain world of
sin.'

XXV

'Nay, Isabel, for such stern choice
First wilt thou wait thy brother's
voice ; 619
Then ponder if in convent scene
No softer thoughts might inter-
vene —
Say they were of that unknown
knight,
Victor in Woodstock's tourney,
fight —
Nay, if his name such blush you
owe,
Victorious o'er a fairer foe !'
Truly his penetrating eye
Hath caught that blush's passing
dye, —

Like the last beam of evening
thrown

On a white cloud, — just seen and
gone.

Soon with calm cheek and steady
eye 630

The princess made composed re-
ply :

'I guess my brother's meaning
well ;

For not so silent is the cell
But we have heard the islemen all
Arm in thy cause at Ronald's call,
And mine eye proves that knight
unknown

And the brave Island Lord are
one.

Had then his suit been earlier
made,

In his own name with thee to
aid —

But that his plighted faith for-
bade — 640

I know not — But thy page so
near? —

This is no tale for menial's ear.'

XXVI

Still stood that page, as far apart
As the small cell would space
afford ;

With dizzy eye and bursting heart
He leant his weight on Bruce's
sword,

The monarch's mantle too he bore,
And drew the fold his visage o'er.

'Fear not for him — in murderous
strife,'

Said Bruce, 'his warning saved my
life ; 650

Full seldom parts he from my side,
And in his silence I confide,
Since he can tell no tale again.

He is a boy of gentle strain,
And I have purposed he shall
dwell

In Augustine the chaplain's cell
And wait on thee, my Isabel. —

Mind not his tears ; I've seen
them flow,

As in the thaw dissolves the snow.

'Tis a kind youth, but fanciful, 660
 Unfit against the tide to pull,
 And those that with the Bruce
 would sail
 Must learn to strive with stream
 and gale.
 But forward, gentle Isabel —
 My answer for Lord Ronald tell.'

XXVII

' This answer beto Ronald given —
 The heart he asks is fixed on
 heaven.

My love was like a summer flower
 That withered in the wintry hour,
 Born but of vanity and pride, 670
 And with these sunny visions
 died.

If further press his suit — then
 say

He should his plighted troth obey,
 Troth plighted both with ring and
 word,

And sworn on crucifix and
 sword. —

O, shame thee, Robert! I have
 seen

Thou hast a woman's guardian
 been!

Even in extremity's dread hour,
 When pressed on thee the South-
 ern power,

And safety, to all human sight, 680
 Was only found in rapid flight,
 Thou heard'st a wretched female
 plain

In agony of travail-pain,
 And thou didst bid thy little band
 Upon the instant turn and stand,
 And dare the worst the foe might
 do

Rather than, like a knight un-
 true,

Leave to pursuers merciless
 A woman in her last distress.

And wilt thou now deny thine
 aid 690

To an oppressed and injured maid,
 Even plead for Ronald's perfidy
 And press his fickle faith on
 me? —

So witness Heaven, as true I vow,
 Had I those earthly feelings now
 Which could my former bosom
 move

Ere taught to set its hopes above,
 I'd spurn each proffer he could
 bring

Till at my feet he laid the ring,
 The ring and spousal contract
 both, 700

And fair acquittal of his oath,
 By her who brooks his perjured
 scorn,

The ill-requited Maid of Lorn!'

XXVIII

With sudden impulse forward
 sprung

The page and on her neck he
 hung;

Then, recollected instantly,
 His head he stooped and bent his
 knee,

Kissed twice the hand of Isabel,
 Arose, and sudden left the cell. —
 The princess, loosened from his
 hold, 710

Blushed angry at his bearing bold;
 But good King Robert cried,
 'Chafe not — by signs he speaks
 his mind,

He heard the plan my care de-
 signed,

Nor could his transports hide. —
 But, sister, now bethink thee well;
 No easy choice the convent cell;
 Trust, I shall play no tyrant part,
 Either to force thy hand or heart,
 Or suffer that Lord Ronald scorn
 Or wrong for thee the Maid of Lorn.
 But think, — not long the time has
 been, 722

That thou wert wont to sigh un-
 seen,

And wouldst the ditties best ap-
 prove

That told some lay of hapless love.
 Now are thy wishes in thy power,
 And thou art bent on cloister
 bower!

O, if our Edward knew the change,

How would his busy satire range,
 With many a sarcasm varied
 still 730
 On woman's wish and woman's
 will! '—

XXIX

'Brother, I well believe,' she said,
 'Even so would Edward's part be
 played.

Kindly in heart, in word severe,
 A foe to thought and grief and
 fear,

He holds his humor uncontrolled;
 But thou art of another mould.

Say then to Ronald, as I say,
 Unless before my feet he lay
 The ring which bound the faith he
 swore, 740

By Edith freely yielded o'er,
 He moves his suit to me no more.
 Nor do I promise, even if now
 He stood absolved of spousal vow,
 That I would change my purpose
 made

To shelter me in holy shade. —
 Brother, for little space, farewell!
 To other duties warns the bell.'

XXX

'Lost to the world,' King Robert
 said,

When he had left the royal
 maid, 750

'Lost to the world by lot severe,
 O, what a gem lies buried here,
 Nipped by misfortune's cruel frost,
 The buds of fair affection lost! —
 But what have I with love to do?
 Far sterner cares my lot pursue.
 Pent in this isle we may not lie,
 Nor would it long our wants sup-
 ply.

Right opposite, the mainland tow-
 ers

Of my own Turnberry court our
 powers — 760

Might not my father's beadsman
 hoar,

Cuthbert, who dwells upon the
 shore,

Kindle a signal-flame to show
 The time propitious for the blow?
 It shall be so — some friend shall
 bear

Our mandate with despatch and
 care;

Edward shall find the messenger.
 That fortress ours, the island fleet
 May on the coast of Carrick
 meet. — 769

O Scotland! shall it e'er be mine
 To wreak thy wrongs in battle-
 line,

To raise my victor-head, and see
 Thy hills, thy dales, thy people
 free, —

That glance of bliss is all I crave
 Betwixt my labors and my grave!
 Then down the hill he slowly went,
 Oft pausing on the steep descent,
 And reached the spot where his
 bold train

Held rustic camp upon the plain.

CANTO FIFTH

I

ON fair Loch-Ranza streamed
 the early day,

Thin wreaths of cottage-smoke
 are upward curled

From the lone hamlet which her
 inland bay

And circling mountains sever
 from the world.

And there the fisherman his sail
 unfurled,

The goat-herd drove his kids to
 steep Ben-Ghoil,

Before the hut the dame her spin-
 dle twirled,

Courting the sunbeam as she
 plied her toil, —

For, wake where'er he may, man
 wakes to care and coil.

But other duties called each
 convent maid, 10

Roused by the summons of the
 moss-grown bell;

Sung were the matins and the
 mass was said,
 And every sister sought her sep-
 arate cell,
 Such was the rule, her rosary to
 tell.
 And Isabel has knelt in lonely
 prayer;
 The sunbeam through the nar-
 row lattice fell
 Upon the snowy neck and long
 dark hair,
 As stooped her gentle head in
 meek devotion there.

II

She raised her eyes, that duty
 done,
 When glanced upon the pavement-
 stone, 20
 Gemmed and enchased, a golden
 ring,
 Bound to a scroll with silken
 string,
 With few brief words inscribed to
 tell,
 'This for the Lady Isabel.'
 Within the writing farther bore,
 'T was with this ring his plight he
 swore,
 With this his promise I restore;
 To her who can the heart com-
 mand
 Well may I yield the plighted
 hand.
 And O, for better fortune born, 30
 Grudge not a passing sigh to
 mourn
 Her who was Edith once of Lorn!'
 One single flash of glad surprise
 Just glanced from Isabel's dark
 eyes,
 But vanished in the blush of shame
 That as its penance instant came.
 'O thought unworthy of my race!
 Selfish, ungenerous, mean, and
 base,
 A moment's throb of joy to own
 That rose upon her hopes o'er-
 thrown!— 40
 Thou pledge of vows too well be-
 lieved,

Of man ingrate and maid deceived,
 Think not thy lustre here shall
 gain
 Another heart to hope in vain!
 For thou shalt rest, thou tempting
 gaud,
 Where worldly thoughts are over-
 awed,
 And worldly splendors sink de-
 based.'
 Then by the cross the ring she
 placed.

III

Next rose the thought, — its owner
 far,
 How came it here through bolt
 and bar? — 50
 But the dim lattice is ajar.
 She looks abroad, — the morning
 dew
 A light short step had brushed
 anew,
 And there were footprints seen
 On the carved buttress rising
 still,
 Till on the mossy window-sill
 Their track effaced the green.
 The ivy twigs were torn and
 frayed,
 As if some climber's steps to
 aid. —
 But who the hardy messenger 60
 Whose venturous path these signs
 infer? —
 'Strange doubts are mine! — Mona,
 draw nigh; —
 Naught 'scapes old Mona's curious
 eye —
 What strangers, gentle mother,
 say,
 Have sought these holy walls to-
 day?'
 'None, lady, none of note or name;
 Only your brother's foot-page came
 At peep of dawn — I prayed him
 pass
 To chapel where they said the
 mass;
 But like an arrow he shot by, 70
 And tears seemed bursting from
 his eye.'

IV

The truth at once on Isabel
As darted by a sunbeam fell ;
'T is Edith's self ! — her speech-
less woe,
Her form, her looks, the secret
show ! —

Instant, good Mona, to the bay,
And to my royal brother say,
I do conjure him seek my cell
With that mute page he loves so
well.'

'What! know'st thou not his war-
like host

At break of day has left our
coast?

My old eyes saw them from the tower.

At eve they couched in greenwood
bower.

At dawn a bugle signal made
By their bold lord their ranks ar-
raved;

Up sprung the spears through
bush and tree,

No time for benedicite !

Like deer that, rousing from their
lair,

Just shake the dewdrops from
their hair 89

And toss their armed crest aloft,
Such matins theirs! — ‘Good
mother, soft—

Where does my brother bend his
way?'—

' As I have heard, for Brodick-Bay,
Across the isle — of barks a score
Lie there, 'tis said, to waft them
o'er.

On sudden news, to Carrick
shore.'—

'If such their purpose, deep the need.'

Said anxious Isabel, 'of speed!
Call Father Augustine, good
dame.'— 99

The nun obeyed, the father came.

V

'Kind father, hie without delay
Across the hills to Brodick-Bay.

This message to the Bruce be
given;

I pray him, by his hopes of Heaven,

That till he speak with me he
stay!

Or, if his haste brook no delay,
That he deliver on my suit
Into thy charge that stripling
mute.

Thus prays his sister Isabel
For causes more than she may
tell—

Away, good father! and take
heed

That life and death are on thy
speed.'

His cowl the good old priest did
on.

Took his piked staff and sandalled
shoon.

And, like a palmer bent by eld,
O'er moss and moor his journey
held.

VI

Heavy and dull the foot of age,
And rugged was the pilgrimage ;
But none were there beside whose
care

Might such important message
bear.

Through birchen copse he wandered slow,

Stunted and sapless, thin and low ;
By many a mountain stream he
passed,

From the tall cliffs in tumult cast,
Dashing to foam their waters dun
And sparkling in the summer sun.
Round his gray head the wild cur-
lew

In many a fearless circle flew.
O'er chasms he passed where frac-
tures wide

Craved wary eye and ample stride;
He crossed his brow beside the
stone

Where Druids erst heard victims
groan,

And at the cairns upon the wild

O'er many a heathen hero piled,
 He breathed a timid prayer for
 those
 Who died ere Shiloh's sun arose.
 Beside Macfarlane's Cross he
 staid,
 There told his hours within the
 shade
 And at the stream his thirst al-
 layed.
 Thence onward journeying slowly
 still, ¹⁴⁰
 As evening closed he reached the
 hill
 Where, rising through the wood-
 land green,
 Old Brodick's Gothic towers were
 seen.
 From Hastings late, their English
 lord,
 Douglas had won them by the
 sword.
 The sun that sunk behind the isle
 Now tinged them with a parting
 smile.

VII

But though the beams of light de-
 cay
 'T was bustle all in Brodick-Bay.
 The Bruce's followers crowd the
 shore, ¹⁵⁰
 And boats and barges some un-
 moor,
 Some raise the sail, some seize
 the oar;
 Their eyes oft turned where glim-
 mered far
 What might have seemed an early
 star
 On heaven's blue arch save that
 its light
 Was all too flickering, fierce, and
 bright.
 Far distant in the south the ray
 Shone pale amid retiring day,
 But as, on Carriek shore, ¹⁵⁹
 Dim seen in outline faintly blue,
 The shades of evening closer
 drew,
 It kindled more and more.

The monk's slow steps now press
 the sands,
 And now amid a scene he stands
 Full strange to churchman's
 eye;
 Warriors, who, arming for the
 fight,
 Rivet and clasp their harness
 light,
 And twinkling spears, and axes
 bright,
 And helmets flashing high.
 Oft too with unaccustomed ears
 A language much unmeet he
 hears, ¹⁷¹
 While, hastening all on board,
 As stormy as the swelling surge
 That mixed its roar, the leaders
 urge
 Their followers to the ocean
 verge
 With many a haughty word.

VIII

Through that wild throng the
 father passed
 And reached the royal Bruce at
 last.
 He leant against a stranded boat
 That the approaching tide must
 float, ¹⁸⁰
 And counted every rippling wave
 As higher yet her sides they lave,
 And oft the distant fire he eyed,
 And closer yet his hauberk tied,
 And loosened in its sheath his
 brand.
 Edward and Lennox were at hand,
 Douglas and Ronald had the care
 The soldiers to the barks to
 share. —
 The monk approached and homage
 paid;
 'And art thou come,' King Robert
 said, ¹⁹⁰
 'So far to bless us ere we part?' —
 'My liege, and with a loyal heart! —
 But other charge I have to tell,' —
 And spoke the hest of Isabel.
 'Now by Saint Giles,' the monarch
 cried,

'This moves me much! — this
morning tide
I sent the stripling to Saint Bride
With my commandment there to
bide.'

'Thither he came the portress
showed,
But there, my liege, made brief
abode.' — 200

IX

'T was I,' said Edward, 'found
employ
Of nobler import for the boy.
Deep pondering in my anxious
mind

A fitting messenger to find
To bear thy written mandate o'er
To Cuthbert on the Carrick shore,
I chanced at early dawn to pass
The chapel gate to snatch a mass.
I found the stripling on a tomb
Low-seated, weeping for the doom
That gave his youth to convent
gloom. 211

I told my purpose and his eyes
Flashed joyful at the glad sur-
prise.

He bounded to the skiff, the sail
Was spread before a prosperous
gale,

And well my charge he hath
obeyed;

For see! the ruddy signal made
That Clifford with his merry-men
all

Guards carelessly our father's
hall.'

X

'O wild of thought and hard of
heart!' 220

Answered the monarch, 'on a
part

Of such deep danger to employ
A mute, an orphan, and a boy!
Unfit for flight, unfit for strife,
Without a tongue to plead for life!
Now, were my right restored by
Heaven,

Edward, my crown I would have
given

Ere, thrust on such adventure wild,
I perilled thus the helpless child.'
Offended half and half submiss, —
'Brother and liege, of blame like
this,' 231

Edward replied, 'I little dreamed.
A stranger messenger, I deemed,
Might safest seek the beadsman's
cell

Where all thy squires are known
so well.

Noteless his presence, sharp his
sense,

His imperfection his defence.

If seen, none can his errand guess;
If ta'en, his words no tale ex-
press —

Methinks, too, yonder beacon's
shine 240

Might explate greater fault than
mine.'

'Rash,' said King Robert, 'was
the deed —

But it is done. Embark with
speed! —

Good father, say to Isabel
How this unhappy chance befell;
If well we thrive on yonder shore,
Soon shall my care her page re-
store.

Our greeting to our sister bear,
And think of us in mass and
prayer.'

XI

'Ay!' said the priest, 'while this
poor hand 250

Can chalice raise or cross com-
mand,

While my old voice has accents'
use,

Can Augustine forget the Bruce!
Then to his side Lord Ronald

pressed,
And whispered, 'Bear thou this
request,

That when by Bruce's side I fight
For Scotland's crown and free-
dom's right,

The princess grace her knight to
bear

Some token of her favoring care ;
It shall be shown where England's
best 260

May shrink to see it on my crest.
And for the boy — since weightier
care

For royal Bruce the times prepare,
The helpless youth is Ronald's
charge,

His couch my plaid, his fence my
targe.'

He ceased ; for many an eager
hand

Had urged the barges from the
strand.

Their number was a score and ten,
They bore thrice threescore chosen
men.

With such small force did Bruce
at last 270

The die for death or empire cast !

XII

Now on the darkening main afloat,
Ready and manned rocks every
boat ;

Beneath their oars the ocean's
might

Was dashed to sparks of glimmer-
ing light.

Faint and more faint, as off they
bore,

Their armor glanced against the
shore,

And, mingled with the dashing
tide,

Their murmuring voices distant
died. —

'God speed them !' said the priest,
as dark 280

On distant billows glides each
bark ;

'O Heaven ! when swords for free-
dom shine

And monarch's right, the cause is
thine !

Edge doubly every patriot blow !
Beat down the banners of the foe !

And be it to the nations known,
That victory is from God alone !'

As up the hill his path he drew,

He turned his blessings to renew,
Oft turned till on the darkened
coast 290

All traces of their course were
lost ;

Then slowly bent to Brodick
tower

To shelter for the evening hour.

XIII

In night the fairy prospects sink
Where Cumray's isles with ver-
dant link

Close the fair entrance of the
Clyde ;

The woods of Bute, no more de-
served,

Are gone — and on the placid
sea

The rowers ply their task with
glee,

While hands that knightly lances
bore 300

Impatient aid the laboring oar.

The half-faced moon shone dim
and pale,

And glanced against the whitened
sail ;

But on that ruddy beacon-light
Each steersman kept the helm
aright,

And oft, for such the king's com-
mand,

That all at once might reach the
strand,

From boat to boat loud shout and
hail

Warned them to crowd or slacken
sail.

South and by west the armada
bore, 310

And near at length the Carrick
shore.

As less and less the distance
grows,

High and more high the beacon
rose ;

The light that seemed a twinkling
star

Now blazed portentous, fierce, and
far.

Dark-red the heaven above it
glowed,
Dark-red the sea beneath it flowed,
Red rose the rocks on ocean's
brim,
In blood-red light her islets swim;
Wild scream the dazzled sea-fowl
gave, ³²⁰
Dropped from their crags on splash-
ing wave.
The deer to distant covert drew,
The black-cock deemed it day and
crew.
Like some tall castle given to
flame,
O'er half the land the lustre came.
'Now, good my liege and brother
sage,
What think ye of mine elfin
page?' —
'Row on!' the noble king replied,
'We 'll learn the truth whate'er
betide;
Yet sure the beadsman and the
child ³³⁰
Could ne'er have waked that bea-
con wild.'

XIV

With that the boats approached
the land,
But Edward's grounded on the
sand;
The eager knight leaped in the
sea
Waist-deep and first on shore was
he,
Though every barge's hardy band
Contended which should gain the
land,
When that strange light, which
seen afar
Seemed steady as the polar star,
Now, like a prophet's fiery chair,
Seemed travelling the realms of
air. ³⁴¹
Wide o'er the sky the splendor
glows
As that portentous meteor rose;
Helm, axe, and falchion glittered
bright,

And in the red and dusky light
His comrade's face each warrior
saw,
Nor marvelled it was pale with
awe.
Then high in air the beams were
lost,
And darkness sunk upon the
coast. —
Ronald to Heaven a prayer ad-
dressed, ³⁵⁰
And Douglas crossed his daunt-
less breast;
'Saint James protect us!' Lennox
cried,
But reckless Edward spoke aside,
'Deem'st thou, Kirkpatrick, in
that flame
Red Comyn's angry spirit came,
Or would thy dauntless heart en-
dure
Once more to make assurance
sure?'
'Hush!' said the Bruce; 'we soon
shall know
If this be sorcerer's empty show
Or stratagem of southern foe. ³⁶⁰
The moon shines out — upon the
sand
Let every leader rank his band.'

XV

Faintly the moon's pale beams
supply
That ruddy light's unnatural dye;
The dubious cold reflection lay
On the wet sands and quiet bay.
Beneath the rocks King Robert
drew
His scattered files to order due,
Till shield compact and serried
spear
In the cool light shone blue and
clear. ³⁷⁰
Then down a path that sought the
tide
That speechless page was seen to
glide;
He knelt him lowly on the sand,
And gave a scroll to Robert's
hand.

'A torch,' the monarch cried,
'What, ho!

Now shall we Cuthbert's tidings
know.'

But evil news the letters bear,
The Clifford's force was strong and
ware,

Augmented too, that very morn,
By mountaineers who came with
Lorn. 380

Long harrowed by oppressor's
hand,

Courage and faith had fled the
land,

And over Carrick, dark and deep,
Had sunk dejection's iron sleep.—

Cuthbert had seen that beacon
flame,

Unwitting from what source it
came.

Doubtful of perilous event,
Edward's mute messenger he sent,
If Bruce deceived should venture

o'er, 389
To warn him from the fatal shore.

XVI

As round the torch the leaders
crowd,

Bruce read these chilling news
aloud.

'What counsel, nobles, have we
now?—

To ambush us in greenwood bough,
And take the chance which fate
may send

To bring our enterprise to end?
Or shall we turn us to the main

As exiles, and embark again?' 390
Answered fierce Edward, 'Hap

what may;
In Carrick Carrick's lord must
stay. 400

I would not minstrels told the tale
Wildfire or meteor made us quail.'

Answered the Douglas, 'If my
liege

May win yon walls by storm or
siege,

Then were each brave and patriot
heart

Kindled of new for loyal part.'

Answered Lord Ronald, 'Not for
shame

Would I that aged Torquil came
And found, for all our empty boast,

Without a blow we fled the coast.
I will not credit that this land, 411

So famed for warlike heart and
hand,

The nurse of Wallace and of Bruce,
Will long with tyrants hold a

truce.'

'Prove we our fate—the brunt
we'll bide!'

So Boyd and Haye and Lennox
cried;

So said, so vowed the leaders all;
So Bruce resolved: 'And in my
hall

Since the bold Southern make their
home,

The hour of payment soon shall
come, 420

When with a rough and rugged
host

Clifford may reckon to his cost.
Meantime, through well-known

bosk and dell
I'll lead where we may shelter
well.'

XVII

Now ask you whence that won-
drous light,

Whose fairy glow beguiled their
sight?—

It ne'er was known—yet gray-
haired eld

A superstitious credence held
That never did a mortal hand

Wake its broad glare on Carrick
strand; 430

Nay, and that on the selfsame
night

When Bruce crossed o'er still
gleams the light.

Yearly it gleams o'er mount and
moor

And glittering wave and crim-
soned shore—

But whether beam celestial, lent

By Heaven to aid the king's de-
 scent,
 Or fire hell-kindled from beneath
 To lure him to defeat and death,
 Or were it but some meteor strange
 Of such as oft through midnight
 range, 440
 Startling the traveller late and
 lone,
 I know not—and it ne'er was
 known.

XVIII

Now up the rocky pass they drew,
 And Ronald, to his promise true,
 Still made his arm the stripling's
 stay,
 To aid him on the rugged way.
 'Now cheer thee, simple Amadine!
 Why throbs that silly heart of
 thine?'—
 That name the pirates to their
 slave—
 In Gaelic 't is the Changeling—
 gave— 450
 'Dost thou not rest thee on my
 arm?
 Do not my plaid-folds hold thee
 warm?
 Hath not the wild bull's treble hide
 This targe for thee and me sup-
 plied?
 Is not Clan-Colla's sword of steel?
 And, trembler, canst thou terror
 feel?
 Cheer thee, and still that throbbing
 heart;
 From Ronald's guard thou shalt
 not part.'—
 O! many a shaft at random sent
 Finds mark the archer little
 meant! 460
 And many a word at random
 spoken
 May soothe or wound a heart
 that's broken!
 Half soothed, half grieved, half
 terrified,
 Close drew the page to Ronald's
 side;
 A wild delirious thrill of joy

Was in that hour of agony,
 As up the steepy pass he strove,
 Fear, toil, and sorrow, lost in love!

XIX

The barrier of that iron shore,
 The rock's steep ledge, is now
 climbed o'er; 470
 And from the castle's distant wall,
 From tower to tower the warders
 call:
 The sound swings over land and
 sea,
 And marks a watchful enemy.—
 They gained the Chase, a wide do-
 main
 Left for the castle's sylvan reign—
 Seek not the scene; the axe, the
 plough,
 The boor's dull fence, have marred
 it now,
 But then soft swept in velvet green
 The plain with many a glade be-
 tween, 480
 Whose tangled alleys far invade
 The depth of the brown forest
 shade.
 Here the tall fern obscured the
 lawn,
 Fair shelter for the sportive fawn;
 There, tufted close with copse-
 wood green,
 Was many a swelling hillock seen;
 And all around was verdure meet
 For pressure of the fairies' feet.
 The glossy holly loved the park,
 The yew-tree lent its shadow dark,
 And many an old oak, worn and
 bare, 491
 With all its shivered boughs was
 there.
 Lovely between, the moonbeams
 fell
 On lawn and hillock, glade and
 dell.
 The gallant monarch sighed to see
 These glades so loved in childhood
 free,
 Bethinking that as outlaw now
 He ranged beneath the forest
 bough.

XX

Fast o'er the moonlight Chase they
 sped.
 Well knew the band that measured
 tread 500
 When, in retreat or in advance,
 The serried warriors move at once;
 And evil were the luck if dawn
 Descried them on the open lawn.
 Copses they traverse, brooks they
 cross,
 Strain up the bank and o'er the
 moss.
 From the exhausted page's brow
 Cold drops of toil are streaming
 now;
 With effort faint and lengthened
 pause,
 His weary step the stripling draws.
 'Nay, droop not yet!' the warrior
 said; 511
 'Come, let me give thee ease and
 aid!
 Strong are mine arms, and little
 care
 A weight so slight as thine to
 bear. —
 What! wilt thou not? — capricious
 boy! —
 Then thine own limbs and strength
 employ.
 Pass but this night and pass thy
 care,
 I'll place thee with a lady fair,
 Where thou shalt tune thy lute to
 tell
 How Ronald loves fair Isabel!' 520
 Worn out, disheartened, and dis-
 mayed,
 Here Amadine let go the plaid;
 His trembling limbs their aid re-
 fuse,
 He sunk among the midnight
 dews!

XXI

What may be done? — the night is
 gone —
 The Bruce's band moves swiftly
 on —
 Eternal shame if at the brunt

Lord Ronald grace not battle's
 front! —
 'See yonder oak within whose
 trunk 529
 Decay a darkened cell hath sunk;
 Enter and rest thee there a space,
 Wrap in my plaid thy limbs, thy
 face.
 I will not be, believe me, far,
 But must not quit the ranks of
 war.
 Well will I mark the bosky
 bourne,
 And soon, to guard thee hence, re-
 turn. —
 Nay, weep not so, thou simple boy!
 But sleep in peace and wake in
 joy.'
 In sylvan lodging close bestowed,
 He placed the page, and onward
 strode 540
 With strength put forth o'er moss
 and brook,
 And soon the marching band o'er-
 took.

XXII

Thus strangely left, long sobbed
 and wept
 The page till wearied out he slept —
 A rough voice waked his dream —
 'Nay, here,
 Here by this thicket passed the
 deer —
 Beneath that oak old Ryno staid —
 What have we here? — A Scottish
 plaid
 And in its folds a stripling laid? —
 Come forth! thy name and busi-
 ness tell! 550
 What, silent? — then I guess thee
 well,
 The spy that sought old Cuthbert's
 cell,
 Wafted from Arran yester morn —
 Come, comrades, we will straight
 return.
 Our Lord may choose the rack
 should teach
 To this young lurcher use of
 speech.

Thy bow-string, till I bind him
fast.' —

'Nay, but he weeps and stands
aghast;

Unbound we'll lead him, fear it
not;

'T is a fair stripling, though a
Scot.' 560

The hunters to the castle sped,
And there the hapless captive led.

XXIII

Stout Clifford in the castle-court
Prepared him for the morning
sport;

And now with Lorn held deep dis-
course,

Now gave command for hound
and horse.

War-steeds and palfreys pawed
the ground,

And many a deer-dog howled
around.

To Amadine Lorn's well-known
word

Replying to that Southern lord, 570
Mixed with his clanging din, might
seem

The phantasm of a fevered dream.
The tone upon his ringing ears

Came like the sounds which fancy
hears

When in rude waves or roaring
winds

Some words of woe the muser finds,
Until more loudly and more near

Their speech arrests the page's
ear.

XXIV

'And was she thus,' said Clifford,
'lost?

The priest should rue it to his
cost! 580

What says the monk?' — 'The
holy sire

Owens that in masquer's quaint
attire

She sought his skiff disguised, un-
known

To all except to him alone.

But, says the priest, a bark from
Lorn

Laid them aboard that very morn,
And pirates seized her for their
prey.

He proffered ransom gold to pay
And they agreed — but ere told
o'er,

The winds blow loud, the billows
roar; 590

They severed and they met no
more.

He deems — such tempests vexed
the coast —

Ship, crew, and fugitive were lost.
So let it be, with the disgrace

And scandal of her lofty race!
Thrice better she had ne'er been
born

Than brought her infamy on
Lorn!'

XXV

Lord Clifford now the captive
spied; —

'Whom, Herbert, hast thou there?'
he cried.

'A spy we seized within the
Chase, 600

A hollow oak his lurking-place.' —

'What tidings can the youth af-
ford?' —

'He plays the mute.' — 'Then
noose a cord —

Unless brave Lorn reverse the
doom

For his plaid's sake.' — 'Clan-Col-
la's loom,'

Said Lorn, whose careless glances
trace

Rather the vesture than the face,
'Clan-Colla's dames such tartans

twine;

Wearer nor plaid claims care of
mine.

Give him, if my advice you crave,
His own scathed oak; and let him
wave 611

In air unless, by terror wrung,
A frank confession find his

tongue. —

Nor shall he die without his rite ;
Thou, Angus Roy, attend the sight,
And give Clan-Colla's dirge thy
breath

As they convey him to his
death.' —

'O brother! cruel to the last!'

Through the poor captive's bosom
passed

The thought, but, to his purpose
true, 620

He said not, though he sighed
'Adieu!'

XXVI

And will he keep his purpose still
In sight of that last closing ill,
When one poor breath, one single
word,

May freedom, safety, life, afford?
Can he resist the instinctive call
For life that bids us barter all? —

Love, strong as death, his heart
hath steeled,

His nerves hath strung — he will
not yield!

Since that poor breath, that little
word, 630

May yield Lord Ronald to the
sword. —

Clan-Colla's dirge is pealing wide,
The griesly headsmen's by his
side ;

Along the greenwood Chase they
bend,

And now their march has ghastly
end!

That old and shattered oak be-
neath,

They destine for the place of
death.

What thoughts are his, while all
in vain

His eye for aid explores the plain?
What thoughts, while with a dizzy

ear 640

He hears the death-prayer mut-
tered near?

And must he die such death ac-
curst,

Or will that bosom-secret burst?

Cold on his brow breaks terror's
dew,

His trembling lips are livid blue ;

The agony of parting life

Has naught to match that mo-
ment's strife !

XXVII

But other witnesses are nigh,

Who mock at fear, and death defy !

Soon as the dire lament was
played 650

It waked the lurking ambuscade.

The Island Lord looked forth and
spied

The cause, and loud in fury cried,
'By Heaven, they lead the page to

die,

And mock me in his agony !

They shall aby it! ' — On his arm
Bruce laid strong grasp, 'They
shall not harm

A ringlet of the stripling's hair ;

But till I give the word forbear.

Douglas, lead fifty of our force 660

Up yonder hollow water-course,
And couch thee midway on the
wold,

Between the flyers and their hold:

A spear above the copse displayed,

Be signal of the ambush made. —

Edward, with forty spearmen
straight

Through yonder copse approach
the gate,

And when thou hear'st the battle-
din

Rush forward and the passage win,
Secure the drawbridge, storm the

port, 670

And man and guard the castle-
court. —

The rest move slowly forth with
me,

In shelter of the forest tree,

Till Douglas at his post I see.'

XXVIII

Like war-horse eager to rush on,

Compelled to wait the signal
blown,

Hid, and scarce hid, by greenwood
bough,
Trembling with rage stands Ronald
now,
And in his grasp his sword gleams
blue,
Soon to be dyed with deadlier
hue. — 680
Meanwhile the Bruce with steady
eye
Sees the dark death-train moving
by,
And heedful measures oft the
space
The Douglas and his band must
trace,
Ere they can reach their destined
ground.
Now sinks the dirge's wailing
sound,
Now cluster round the direful
tree
That slow and solemn company,
While hymn mistuned and mut-
tered prayer
The victim for his fate pre-
pare, — 690
What glances o'er the greenwood
shade?
The spear that marks the ambus-
cade! —
'Now, noble chief! I leave thee
loose;
Upon them, Ronald!' said the
Bruce.

XXIX

'The Bruce! the Bruce!' to well-
known cry
His native rocks and woods re-
ply.
'The Bruce! the Bruce!' in that
dread word
The knell of hundred deaths was
heard.
The astonished Southern gazed at
first
Where the wild tempest was to
burst 700
That waked in that presaging
name.

Before, behind, around it came!
Half-armed, surprised, on every
side
Hemmed in, hewed down, they
bled and died.
Deep in the ring the Bruce en-
gaged,
And fierce Clan-Colla's broadsword
raged!
Full soon the few who fought were
sped,
Nor better was their lot who fled
And met mid terror's wild career
The Douglas's redoubted spear!
Two hundred yeomen on that
morn 711
The castle left, and none return.

XXX

Not on their flight pressed Ron-
ald's brand,
A gentler duty claimed his hand.
He raised the page where on the
plain
His fear had sunk him with the
slain:
And twice that morn surprise well
near
Betrayed the secret kept by fear;
Once when with life returning
came
To the boy's lip Lord Ronald's
name, 720
And hardly recollection drowned
The accents in a murmuring
sound;
And once when scarce he could re-
sist
The chieftain's care to loose the
vest
Drawn tightly o'er his laboring
breast.
But then the Bruce's bugle blew,
For martial work was yet to do.

XXXI

A harder task fierce Edward waits.
Ere signal given the castle gates
His fury had assailed; 730
Such was his wonted reckless
mood,

Yet desperate valor oft made good,

Even by its daring, venture rude
Where prudence might have failed.

Upon the bridge his strength he threw,

And struck the iron chain in two,
By which its planks arose ;

The warder next his axe's edge
Struck down upon the threshold-ledge,

'Twixt door and post a ghastly wedge! 740

The gate they may not close.
Well fought the Southern in the fray,

Clifford and Lorn fought well that day,

But stubborn Edward forced his way

Against a hundred foes.
Loud came the cry, 'The Bruce!
the Bruce!'

No hope or in defence or truce,—
Fresh combatants pour in ;

Mad with success and drunk with gore,

They drive the struggling foe before 750

And ward on ward they win.
Unsparring was the vengeful sword,

And limbs were lopped and life-blood poured,

The cry of death and conflict roared,

And fearful was the din !
The startling horses plunged and flung,

Clamored the dogs till turrets rung,

Nor sunk the fearful cry
Till not a foeman was there found

Alive save those who on the ground 760

Groaned in their agony !

XXXII

The valiant Clifford is no more ;
On Ronald's broadsword streamed his gore.

But better hap had he of Lorn,
Who, by the foeman backward borne,

Yet gained with slender train the port

Where lay his bark beneath the fort,

And cut the cable loose.
Short were his shrift in that debate,

That hour of fury and of fate, 770
If Lorn encountered Bruce!

Then long and loud the victor shout

From turret and from tower rung out,

The rugged vaults replied ;
And from the donjon tower on high

The men of Carriek may descry
Saint Andrew's cross in blazonry

Of silver waving wide !

XXXIII

The Bruce hath won his father's hall !—

'Welcome, brave friends and comrades all, 780

Welcome to mirth and joy !
The first, the last, is welcome here,

From lord and chieftain, prince and peer,

To this poor speechless boy,
Great God ! once more my sire's abode

Is mine — behold the floor I trode
In tottering infancy !

And there the vaulted arch whose sound

Echoed my joyous shout and bound

In boyhood, and that rung around
To youth's unthinking glee ! 791

O, first to thee, all-gracious Heaven,

Then to my friends, my thanks be given !'—

He paused a space, his brow he crossed—

Then on the board his sword he tossed,

Yet steaming hot; with Southern
gore
From hilt to point 't was crimsoned
o'er.

XXXIV

'Bring here,' he said, 'the mazers
four
My noble fathers loved of yore.
Thrice let them circle round the
board, 800
The pledge, fair Scotland's rights
restored!
And he whose lip shall touch the
wine
Without a vow as true as mine,
To hold both lands and life at
naught
Until her freedom shall be
bought, —
Be brand of a disloyal Scot
And lasting infamy his lot!
Sit, gentle friends! our hour of glee
Is brief, we 'll spend it joyously!
Blithest of all the sun's bright
beams, 810
When betwixt storm and storm he
gleams.
Well is our country's work begun,
But more, far more, must yet be
done.
Speed messengers the country
through;
Arouse old friends and gather
new;
Warn Lanark's knights to gird
their mail,
Rouse the brave sons of Teviot-
dale,
Let Ettrick's archers sharp their
darts,
The fairest forms, the truest
hearts!
Call all, call all! from Reeds-wair
Path 820
To the wild confines of Cape-
Wrath;
Wide let the news through Scot-
land ring, —
The Northern Eagle claps his
wing!'

CANTO SIXTH

I

O WHO that shared them ever
shall forget
The emotions of the spirit-rous-
ing time,
When breathless in the mart the
couriers met
Early and late, at evening and
at prime;
When the loud cannon and the
merry chime
Hailed news on news, as field on
field was won,
When Hope, long doubtful,
soared at length sublime,
And our glad eyes, awake as
day begun,
Watched Joy's broad banner rise
to meet the rising sun!

O these were hours when thrill-
ing joy repaid 10
A long, long course of darkness,
doubts, and fears!
The heart-sick faintness of the
hope delayed,
The waste, the woe, the blood-
shed, and the tears,
That tracked with terror twenty
rolling years,
All was forgot in that blithe
jubilee!
Her downcast eye even pale
Affliction rears,
To sigh a thankful prayer amid
the glee
That hailed the Despot's fall, and
peace and liberty!

Such news o'er Scotland's hills
triumphant rode
When 'gainst the invaders turned
the battle's scale, 20
When Bruce's banner had vic-
torious flowed
O'er Loudoun's mountain and in
Ury's vale;
When English blood oft deluged
Douglas-dale,

And fiery Edward routed stout
 Saint John,
 When Randolph's war-cry
 swelled the southern gale,
 And many a fortress, town, and
 tower was won,
 And Fame still sounded forth fresh
 deeds of glory done.

II

Blithe tidings flew from baron's
 tower

To peasant's cot, to forest-bower,
 And waked the solitary cell 30
 Where lone Saint Bride's recluses
 dwell.

Princess no more, fair Isabel,
 A votaress of the order now,
 Say, did the rule that bid thee
 wear

Dim veil and woollen scapulare,
 And reft thy locks of dark-brown
 hair,

That stern and rigid vow,
 Did it condemn the transport high
 Which glistened in thy watery
 eye

When minstrel or when palmer
 told 40

Each fresh exploit of Bruce the
 bold? —

And whose the lovely form that
 shares

Thy anxious hopes, thy fears, thy
 prayers?

No sister she of convent shade;
 So say these locks in lengthened
 braid,

So say the blushes and the sighs,
 The tremors that unbidden rise,
 When, mingled with the Bruce's
 fame,

The brave Lord Ronald's praises
 came.

III

Believe, his father's castle won 50
 And his bold enterprise begun,
 That Bruce's earliest cares restore
 The speechless page to Arran's
 shore:

Nor think that long the quaint dis-
 guise

Concealed her from a sister's
 eyes;

And sister-like in love they dwell
 In that lone convent's silent cell.

There Bruce's slow assent allows
 Fair Isabel the veil and vows;

And there, her sex's dress re-
 gained, 60

The lovely Maid of Lorn re-
 mained,

Unnamed, unknown, while Scot-
 land far

Resounded with the din of war;
 And many a month and many a
 day

In calm seclusion wore away.

IV

These days, these months, to years
 had worn

When tidings of high weight were
 borne

To that lone island's shore;
 Of all the Scottish conquests made
 By the First Edward's ruthless
 blade 70

His son retained no more,
 Northward of Tweed, but Stirling's
 towers,

Beleaguered by King Robert's
 powers;

And they took term of truce,
 If England's King should not re-
 lieve

The siege ere John the Baptist's
 eve,

To yield them to the Bruce.

England was roused — on every
 side

Courier and post and herald hied
 To summon prince and peer, 80

At Berwick-bounds to meet their
 liege,

Prepared to raise fair Stirling's
 siege

With buckler, brand, and spear.
 The term was nigh — they mus-
 tered fast,

By beacon and by bugle-blast

Forth marshalled for the field ;
 There rode each knight of noble
 name,
 There England's hardy archers
 came,
 The land they trode seemed all on
 flame 89
 With banner, blade, and shield !
 And not famed England's powers
 alone,
 Renowned in arms, the summons
 own ;
 For Neustria's knights obeyed,
 Gascogne hath lent her horsemen
 good,
 And Cambria, but of late subdued,
 Sent forth her mountain-multitude,
 And Connoght poured from waste
 and wood
 Her hundred tribes, whose sceptre
 rude
 Dark Eth O'Connor swayed.

V

Right to devoted Caledon 100
 The storm of war rolls slowly on
 With menace deep and dread ;
 So the dark clouds with gathering
 power
 Suspend awhile the threatened
 shower,
 Till every peak and summit lower
 Round the pale pilgrim's head.
 Not with such pilgrim's startled
 eye
 King Robert marked the tempest
 nigh !
 Resolved the brunt to bide,
 His royal summons warned the
 land 110
 That all who owned their king's
 command
 Should instant take the spear and
 brand
 To combat at his side.
 O, who may tell the sons of fame
 That at King Robert's bidding
 came
 To battle for the right !
 From Cheviot to the shores of
 Ross,

From Solway-Sands to Marshal's-
 Moss,
 All bounded them for the fight.
 Such news the royal courier tells
 Who came to rouse dark Arran's
 dells ; 121
 But farther tidings must the ear
 Of Isabel in secret hear.
 These in her cloister walk next
 morn
 Thus shared she with the Maid of
 Lorn : —

VI

' My Edith, can I tell how dear
 Our intercourse of hearts sincere
 Hath been to Isabel ? —
 Judge then the sorrow of my heart
 When I must say the words, We
 part ! 130
 The cheerless convent-cell
 Was not, sweet maiden, made for
 thee ;
 Go thou where thy vocation free
 On happier fortunes fell.
 Nor, Edith, judge thyself betrayed,
 Though Robert knows that Lorn's
 high maid
 And his poor silent page were one.
 Versed in the fickle heart of man,
 Earnest and anxious hath he
 looked
 How Ronald's heart the message
 brooked 140
 That gave him with her last fare-
 well
 The charge of Sister Isabel,
 To think upon thy better right
 And keep the faith his promise
 plight.
 Forgive him for thy sister's sake
 At first if vain repinings wake —
 Long since that mood is gone :
 Now dwells he on thy juster claims,
 And oft his breach of faith he
 blames — 149
 Forgive him for thine own ! ' —

VII

' No ! never to Lord Ronald's bower
 Will I again as paramour ' —

'Nay, hush thee, too impatient
maid,
Until my final tale be said! —
The good King Robert would en-
gage

Edith once more his elfin page,
By her own heart and her own eye
Her lover's penitence to try — 158
Safe in his royal charge and free,
Should such thy final purpose be,
Again unknown to seek the cell,
And live and die with Isabel.'
Thus spoke the maid — King Rob-
ert's eye

Might have some glance of policy;
Dunstaffnage had the monarch
ta'en,

And Lorn had owned King Rob-
ert's reign;

Her brother had to England fled,
And there in banishment was dead;
Ample, through exile, death, and
flight,

O'er tower and land was Edith's
right; 170

This ample right o'er tower and
land

Were safe in Ronald's faithful
hand.

VIII

Embarrassed eye and blushing
cheek

Pleasure and shame and fear be-
speak!

Yet much the reasoning Edith
made:

'Her sister's faith she must up-
braid,

Who gave such secret, dark and
dear,

In counsel to another's ear.

Why should she leave the peaceful
cell? —

How should she part with Isa-
bel? — 180

How wear that strange attire
agen? —

How risk herself midst martial
men? —

And how be guarded on the way? —

At least she might entreat delay.'
Kind Isabel with secret smile
Saw and forgave the maiden's wile,
Reluctant to be thought to move
At the first call of truant love.

IX

O, blame her not! — when zephyrs
wake

The aspen's trembling leaves must
shake; 190

When beams the sun through
April's shower

It needs must bloom, the violet
flower;

And Love, howe'er the maiden
strive,

Must with reviving hope revive!
A thousand soft excuses came

To plead his cause 'gainst virgin
shame.

Pledged by their sires in earliest
youth,

He had her plighted faith and
truth —

Then, 't was her liege's strict com-
mand,

And she beneath his royal hand 200
A ward in person and in land: —

And, last, she was resolved to
stay

Only brief space — one little day —
Close hidden in her safe disguise

From all, but most from Ronald's
eyes —

But once to see him more! — nor
blame

Her wish — to hear him name her
name! —

Then to bear back to solitude
The thought he had his falsehood

rued!
But Isabel, who long had seen 210

Her pallid cheek and pensive
mien,

And well herself the cause might
know,

Though innocent, of Edith's woe,
Joyed, generous, that revolving

time
Gave means to expiate the crime.

High glowed her bosom as she
 said,
 'Well shall her sufferings be re-
 paid!'
 Now came the parting hour—a
 band
 From Arran's mountains left the
 land;
 Their chief, Fitz-Louis, had the
 care 220
 The speechless Amadine to bear
 To Bruce with honor, as behoved
 To page the monarch dearly loved.

X

The king had deemed the maiden
 bright
 Should reach him long before the
 fight,
 But storms and fate her course de-
 lay:
 It was on eve of battle-day
 When o'er the Gillie's-hill she
 rode.
 The landscape like a furnace
 glowed, 229
 And far as e'er the eye was borne
 The lances waved like autumn-
 corn.
 In battles four beneath their
 eye
 The forces of King Robert lie.
 And one below the hill was laid,
 Reserved for rescue and for aid;
 And three advanced formed va-
 ward-line,
 'Twixt Bannock's brook and Nini-
 an's shrine.
 Detached was each, yet each so
 nigh
 As well might mutual aid supply.
 Beyond, the Southern host ap-
 pears, 240
 A boundless wilderness of spears,
 Whose verge or rear the anxious
 eye
 Strove far, but strove in vain, to
 spy.
 Thick flashing in the evening beam,
 Glaives, lances, bills, and banners
 gleam;

And where the heaven joined with
 the hill,
 Was distant armor flashing still,
 So wide, so far, the boundless host
 Seemed in the blue horizon lost.

XI

Down from the hill the maiden
 passed, 250
 At the wild show of war aghast;
 And traversed first the rearward
 host,
 Reserved for aid where needed
 most.
 The men of Carrick and of Ayr,
 Lennox and Lanark too, were
 there,
 And all the western land;
 With these the valiant of the Isles
 Beneath their chieftains ranked
 their files
 In many a plaided band. 259
 There in the centre proudly raised,
 The Bruce's royal standard blazed,
 And there Lord Ronald's banner
 bore
 A galley driven by sail and oar.
 A wild yet pleasing contrast made
 Warriors in mail and plate arrayed,
 With the plumed bonnet and the
 plaid
 By these Hebrideans worn;
 But O, unseen for three long years,
 Dear was the garb of mountaineers
 To the fair Maid of Lorn! 270
 For one she looked—but he was
 far
 Busied amid the ranks of war—
 Yet with affection's troubled eye
 She marked his banner boldly fly,
 Gave on the countless foe a glance,
 And thought on battle's desperate
 chance.

XII

To centre of the vaward-line
 Fitz-Louis guided Amadine.
 Armed all on foot, that host ap-
 pears
 A serried mass of glimmering
 spears. 280

There stood the Marchers' warlike
band,
The warriors there of Lodon's
land;
Ettrick and Liddell bent the yew,
A band of archers fierce though
few;
The men of Nith and Annan's vale,
And the bold Spears of Teviot-
dale;—
The dauntless Douglas these obey,
And the young Stuart's gentle
sway.
Northeastward by Saint Ninian's
shrine,
Beneath fierce Randolph's charge,
combine 290
The warriors whom the hardy
North
From Tay to Sutherland sent forth.
The rest of Scotland's war-array
With Edward Bruce to westward
lay,
Where Bannock with his broken
bank
And deep ravine protects their
flank.
Behind them, screened by shelter-
ing wood,
The gallant Keith, Lord Marshal,
stood:
His men-at-arms bare mace and
lance,
And plumes that wave and helms
that glance. 300
Thus fair divided by the king,
Centre and right and leftward wing
Composed his front; nor distant
far
Was strong reserve to aid the war.
And 't was to front of this array
Her guide and Edith made their
way.

XIII

Here must they pause; for, in ad-
vance
As far as one might pitch a lance,
The monarch rode along the van,
The foe's approaching force to
scan, 310

His line to marshal and to range,
And ranks to square, and fronts
to change.
Alone he rode — from head to
heel
Sheathed in his ready arms of
steel;
Nor mounted yet on war-horse
wight,
But, till more near the shock of
fight,
Reining a palfrey low and light.
A diadem of gold was set
Above his bright steel basinet,
And clasped within its glittering
twine 320
Was seen the glove of Argentine;
Truncheon or leading staff he
lacks,
Bearing instead a battle-axe.
He ranged his soldiers for the
fight
Accoutred thus, in open sight
Of either host. — Three bowshots
far,
Paused the deep front of England's
war,
And rested on their arms awhile,
To close and rank their warlike
file,
And hold high council if that night
Should view the strife or dawning
light. 331

XIV

O, gay yet fearful to behold,
Flashing with steel and rough
with gold,
And bristled o'er with bills and
spears,
With plumes and pennons waving
fair,
Was that bright battle-front! for
there
Rode England's king and peers:
And who, that saw that monarch
ride,
His kingdom battled by his side,
Could then his direful doom fore-
tell! — 340
Fair was his seat in knightly selle,

And in his sprightly eye was set
Some spark of the Plantagenet.
Though light and wandering was
his glance,
It flashed at sight of shield and
lance.

'Know'st thou,' he said, 'De Ar-
gentine,
Yon knight who marshals thus
their line?'—

'The tokens on his helmet tell
The Bruce, my liege: I know him
well.'—

'And shall the audacious traitor
brave

350

The presence where our banners
wave?'—

'So please my liege,' said Argen-
tine,

'Were he but horsed on steed like
mine,

To give him fair and knightly
chance,

I would adventure forth my
lance.'—

'In battle-day,' the king replied,

'Nice tourney rules are set aside.—
Still must the rebel dare our wrath?
Set on him—Sweep him from our
path!'

And at King Edward's signal soon
Dashed from the ranks Sir Henry
Boune.

361

XV

Of Hereford's high blood he came,
A race renowned for knightly fame.
He burned before his monarch's
eye

To do some deed of chivalry.

He spurred his steed, he couched
his lance,

And darted on the Bruce at once.

As motionless as rocks that bide

The wrath of the advancing tide,

The Bruce stood fast.—Each
breast beat high

370

And dazzled was each gazing
eye—

The heart had hardly time to
think,

The eyelid scarce had time to
wink,

While on the king, like flash of
flame,

Spurred to full speed the war-horse
came!

The partridge may the falcon
mock,

If that slight palfrey stand the
shock—

But, swerving from the knight's
career,

Just as they met, Bruce shunned
the spear.

Onward the baffled warrior bore

His course—but soon his course
was o'er!—

381

High in his stirrups stood the
king,

And gave his battle-axe the swing.
Right on De Boune the whiles he

passed

Fell that stern dint—the first—
the last!—

Such strength upon the blow was
put

The helmet crashed like hazel-
nut;

The axe-shaft with its brazen
clasp

Was shivered to the gauntlet
grasp.

Springs from the blow the startled
horse,

390

Drops to the plain the lifeless
corse;

First of that fatal field, how soon,
How sudden, fell the fierce De
Boune!

XVI

One pitying glance the monarch
sped

Where on the field his foe lay
dead;

Then gently turned his palfrey's
head,

And, pacing back his sober way,

Slowly he gained his own array.

There round their king the leaders
crowd,

And blame his recklessness aloud
That risked 'gainst each adventu-
rous spear 401

A life so valued and so dear.
His broken weapon's shaft sur-
veyed

The king, and careless answer
made,

'My loss may pay my folly's tax;
I've broke my trusty battle-axe.'

'T was then Fitz-Louis bending
low

Did Isabel's commission show;
Edith disguised at distance stands,
And hides her blushes with her
hands. 410

The monarch's brow has changed
its hue,

Away the gory axe he threw,
While to the seeming page he
drew,

Clearing war's terrors from his
eye.

Her hand with gentle ease he took
With such a kind protecting look

As to a weak and timid boy
Might speak that elder brother's
care

And elder brother's love were
there.

XVII

'Fear not,' he said, 'young Ama-
dine!' 420

Then whispered, 'Still that name
be thine.

Fate plays her wonted fantasy,
Kind Amadine, with thee and me,
And sends thee here in doubtful
hour.

But soon we are beyond her
power;

For on this chosen battle-plain,
Victor or vanquished, I remain.
Do thou to yonder hill repair;

The followers of our host are
there,

And all who may not weapons
bear. — 430

Fitz-Louis, have him in thy care, —
Joyful we meet, if all go well;

If not, in Arran's holy cell
Thou must take part with Isa-
bel;

For brave Lord Ronald too hath
sworn,

Not to regain the Maid of Lorn —
The bliss on earth he covets most —

Would he forsake his battle-post,
Or shun the fortune that may fall

To Bruce, to Scotland, and to all. —
But, hark! some news these trum-
pets tell; 441

Forgive my haste — farewell! —
farewell!'

And in a lower voice he said,
'Be of good cheer — farewell,
sweet maid!'

XVIII

'What train of dust, with trumpet-
sound

And glimmering spears, is wheel-
ing round

Our leftward flank?' — the mon-
arch cried

To Moray's Earl who rode beside.
'Lo! round thy station pass the
foes!

Randolph, thy wreath hath lost a
rose.' 450

The Earl his visor closed, and said
'My wreath shall bloom, or life
shall fade. —

Follow, my household!' and they
go

Like lightning on the advancing
foe.

'My liege,' said noble Douglas
then,

'Earl Randolph has but one to ten:
Let me go forth his band to aid!' —

'Stir not. The error he hath made,
Let him amend it as he may;

I will not weaken mine array.' 460
Then loudly rose the conflict-cry,

And Douglas's brave heart swelled
high, —

'My liege,' he said, 'with patient
ear

I must not Moray's death-knell
hear!' —

'Then go — but speed thee back again.'

Forth sprung the Douglas with his train:

But when they won a rising hill
He bade his followers hold them still. —

'See, see! the routed Southern fly!
The Earl hath won the victory. 470
Lo! where yon steeds run masterless,

His banner towers above the press.
Rein up; our presence would impair

The fame we come too late to share.'

Back to the host the Douglas rode,
And soon glad tidings are abroad
That, Dayncourt by stout Randolph slain,

His followers fled with loosened rein. —

That skirmish closed the busy day,
And couched in battle's prompt array, 480
Each army on their weapons lay.

XIX

It was a night of lovely June,
High rode in cloudless blue the moon,

Demayet smiled beneath her ray;
Old Stirling's towers arose in light,
And, twined in links of silver bright,

Her winding river lay.

Ah! gentle planet! other sight
Shall greet thee, next returning night, 489

Of broken arms and banners tore,
And marshes dark with human gore,

And piles of slaughtered men and horse,

And Forth that floats the frequent corse,

And many a wounded wretch to plain

Beneath thy silver light in vain!
But now from England's host the cry

Thou hear'st of wassail revelry,
While from the Scottish legions pass

The murmured prayer, the early mass! —

Here, numbers had presumption given; 500

There, bands o'er-matched sought aid from Heaven.

XX

On Gillie's-hill, whose height commands

The battle-field, fair Edith stands
With serf and page unfit for war,
To eye the conflict from afar.

O, with what doubtful agony
She sees the dawning tint the sky! —

Now on the Ochils gleams the sun,
And glistens now Demayet dun:

Is it the lark that carols shrill,
Is it the bittern's early hum?
No! — distant, but increasing still, 512

The trumpet's sound swells up the hill,

With the deep murmur of the drum.

Responsive from the Scottish host,
Pipe-clang and bugle-sound were tossed,

His breast and brow each soldier crossed

And started from the ground;
Armed and arrayed for instant fight,

Rose archer, spearman, squire, and knight, 520

And in the pomp of battle bright
The dread battalia frowned.

XXI

Now onward and in open view
The countless ranks of England drew,

Dark rolling like the ocean-tide
When the rough west hath chafed his pride,

And his deep roar sends challenge wide

To all that bars his way !
In front the gallant archers trode,
The men-at-arms behind them
rode, 530

And midmost of the phalanx
broad

The monarch held his sway.

Beside him many a war-horse
fumes,

Around him waves a sea of
plumes,

Where many a knight in battle
known,

And some who spurs had first
braced on

And deemed that fight should see
them won,

King Edward's hests obey.

De Argentine attends his side,

With stout De Valence, Pem-
broke's pride, 540

Selected champions from the train
To wait upon his bridle-rein.

Upon the Scottish foe he gazed —

At once before his sight amazed
Sunk banner, spear, and shield ;

Each weapon-point is downward
sent,

Each warrior to the ground is bent.

'The rebels, Argentine, repent !

For pardon they have kneeled.' —

'Ay! — but they bend to other
powers, 550

And other pardon sue than ours !
See where yon barefoot abbot

stands
And blesses them with lifted

hands !
Upon the spot where they have

kneeled
These men will die or win the

field.' —

'Then prove we if they die or win !

Bid Gloster's Earl the fight begin.'

XXII

Earl Gilbert waved his truncheon
high

Just as the Northern ranks
arose,

Signal for England's archery 560

To halt and bend their bows.
Then stepped each yeoman forth
a pace,

Glanced at the intervening space,
And raised his left hand high ;

To the right ear the cords they
bring —

At once ten thousand bow-strings
ring,

Ten thousand arrows fly !

Nor paused on the devoted Scot

The ceaseless fury of their shot ;

As fiercely and as fast 570

Forth whistling came the gray-
goose wing

As the wild hailstones pelt and
ring

Adown December's blast.

Nor mountain targe of tough bull-
hide,

Nor lowland mail, that storm may
bide ;

Woe, woe to Scotland's bannered
pride,

If the fell shower may last !

Upon the right behind the wood,

Each by his steed dismounted
stood

The Scottish chivalry ; — 580

With foot in stirrup, hand on mane,

Fierce Edward Bruce can scarce
restrain

His own keen heart, his eager train,

Until the archers gained the plain ;

Then, 'Mount, ye gallants free !'

He cried ; and vaulting from the
ground

His saddle every horseman found.

On high their glittering crests they
toss,

As springs the wild-fire from the
moss ;

The shield hangs down on every
breast, 590

Each ready lance is in the rest,

And loud shouts Edward Bruce,

'Forth, Marshal ! on the peasant
foe !

We'll tame the terrors of their
bow,

And cut the bow-string loose !'

XXIII

Then spurs were dashed in
 chargers' flanks,
 They rushed among the archer
 ranks,
 No spears were there the shock to
 let,
 No stakes to turn the charge were
 set,
 And how shall yeoman's armor
 slight 600
 Stand the long lance and mace of
 might?
 Or what may their short swords
 avail
 'Gainst barbed horse and shirt of
 mail?
 Amid their ranks the chargers
 sprung,
 High o'er their heads the weapons
 swung,
 And shriek and groan and venge-
 ful shout
 Give note of triumph and of rout!
 Awhile with stubborn hardihood
 Their English hearts the strife
 made good.
 Borne down at length on every
 side, 610
 Compelled to flight they scatter
 wide. —
 Let stags of Sherwood leap for
 glee,
 And bound the deer of Dallom-
 Lee!
 The broken bows of Bannock's
 shore
 Shall in the greenwood ring no
 more!
 Round Wakefield's merry May-
 pole now
 The maids may twine the summer
 bough,
 May northward look with longing
 glance
 For those that wont to lead the
 dance,
 For the blithe archers look in
 vain! 620
 Broken, dispersed, in flight o'er-
 ta'en,

Pierced through, trode down, by
 thousands slain,
 They cumber Bannock's bloody
 plain.

XXIV

The king with scorn beheld their
 flight.
 'Are these,' he said, 'our yeomen
 wight?
 Each braggart churl could boast
 before
 Twelve Scottish lives his baldric
 bore!
 Fitter to plunder chase or park
 Than make a manly foe their
 mark. —
 Forward, each gentleman and
 knight! 630
 Let gentle blood show generous
 might
 And chivalry redeem the fight!'
 To rightward of the wild affray,
 The field showed fair and level
 way;
 But in mid-space the Bruce's
 care
 Had bored the ground with many
 a pit,
 With turf and brushwood hidden
 yet,
 That formed a ghastly snare.
 Rushing, ten thousand horsemen
 came,
 With spears in rest and hearts on
 flame 640
 That panted for the shock!
 With blazing crests and banners
 spread,
 And trumpet-clang and clamor
 dread,
 The wide plain thundered to their
 tread
 As far as Stirling rock.
 Down! down! in headlong over-
 throw,
 Horseman and horse, the foremost
 go,
 Wild floundering on the field!
 The first are in destruction's
 gorge,

Their followers wildly o'er them
urge ; — 650

The knightly helm and shield,
The mail, the accon, and the
spear,

Strong hand, high heart, are use-
less here !

Loud from the mass confused the
cry

Of dying warriors swells on high,
And steeds that shriek in agony !
They came like mountain-torrent
red

That thunders o'er its rocky bed ;
They broke like that same tor-
rent's wave

When swallowed by a darksome
cave. 660

Billows on billows burst and boil,
Maintaining still the stern turmoil,
And to their wild and tortured
groan

Each adds new terrors of his own !

XXV

Too strong in courage and in
might

Was England yet to yield the fight.

Her noblest all are here ;
Names that to fear were never
known,

Bold Norfolk's Earl De Brother-
ton, 669

And Oxford's famed De Vere.
There Gloster plied the bloody
sword,

And Berkley, Grey, and Hereford,
Bottetourt and Sanzavere,

Ross, Montague, and Mauley
came,

And Courtenay's pride, and Percy's
fame —

Names known too well in Scot-
land's war

At Falkirk, Methven, and Dunbar,
Blazed broader yet in after years
At Cressy red and fell Poitiers.

Pembroke with these and Argen-
tine 680

Brought up the rearward battle-
line.

With caution o'er the ground they
tread,

Slippery with blood and piled with
dead,

Till hand to hand in battle set,
The bills with spears and axes
met,

And, closing dark on every side,
Raged the full contest far and
wide.

Then was the strength of Douglas
tried,

Then proved was Randolph's gen-
erous pride,

And well did Stewart's actions
grace 690

The sire of Scotland's royal race !

Firmly they kept their ground ;
As firmly England onward pressed,
And down went many a noble
crest,

And rent was many a valiant
breast,

And Slaughter revelled round.

XXVI

Unflinching foot 'gainst foot was
set,

Unceasing blow by blow was met ;
The groans of those who fell

Were drowned amid the shriller
clang 700

That from the blades and harness
rang,

And in the battle-yell.
Yet fast they fell, unheard, forgot,

Both Southern fierce and hardy
Scot ;

And O, amid that waste of life
What various motives fired the
strife !

The aspiring noble bled for fame,
The patriot for his country's claim ;
This knight his youthful strength
to prove, 709

And that to win his lady's love ;
Some fought from ruffian thirst of
blood,

From habit some or hardihood.
But ruffian stern and soldier good,
The noble and the slave,

From various cause the same wild
road,
On the same bloody morning,
trode
To that dark inn, the grave!

XXVII

The tug of strife to flag begins,
Though neither loses yet nor wins.
High rides the sun, thick rolls the
dust, 720
And feebler speeds the blow and
thrust.

Douglas leans on his war-sword
now,
And Randolph wipes his bloody
brow;
Nor less had toiled each Southern
knight
From morn till mid-day in the
fight.

Strong Egremont for air must
gasp,
Beauchamp undoes his visor-clasp,
And Montague must quit his spear,
And sinks thy falchion, bold De
Vere!

The blows of Berkley fall less
fast, 730
And gallant Pembroke's bugle
blast

Hath lost its lively tone;
Sinks, Argentine, thy battle-word,
And Percy's shout was fainter
heard,—

'My merry-men, fight on!'

XXVIII

Bruce, with the pilot's wary eye,
The slackening of the storm could
spy.

'One effort more and Scotland's
free!

Lord of the Isles, my trust in
thee

Is firm as Ailsa Rock; 740
Rush on with Highland sword and
targe,

I with my Carrick spearmen
charge;

Now forward to the shock!'

At once the spears were forward
thrown,

Against the sun the broadswords
shone;

The pibroch lent its maddening
tone,

And loud King Robert's voice was
known—

'Carrick, press on—they fail, they
fail!

Press on, brave sons of Innisgail,
The foe is fainting fast! 750

Each strike for parent, child, and
wife,

For Scotland, liberty, and life,—
The battle cannot last!'

XXIX

The fresh and desperate onset bore
The foes three furlongs back and
more,

Leaving their noblest in their gore.
Alone, De Argentine

Yet bears on high his red-cross
shield,

Gathers the relics of the field,
Renews the ranks where they
have reeled, 760

And still makes good the line.
Brief strife but fierce his efforts
raise,

A bright but momentary blaze.
Fair Edith heard the Southern
shout,

Beheld them turning from the
route,

Heard the wild call their trumpets
sent

In notes 'twixt triumph and la-
ment.

That rallying force, combined
anew,

Appeared in her distracted view
To hem the Islesmen round; 770

'O God! the combat they renew,
And is no rescue found!

And ye that look thus tamely on,
And see your native land o'er-
thrown,

O, are your hearts of flesh or
stone?'

XXX

The multitude that watched afar,
Rejected from the ranks of war,
Had not unmoved beheld the fight
When strove the Bruce for Scotland's right;

Each heart had caught the patriot
spark, 780

Old man and stripling, priest and
clerk,

Bondsman and serf; even female
hand

Stretched to the hatchet or the
brand;

But when mute Amadine they
heard

Give to their zeal his signal-word

A frenzy fired the throng;—

'Portents and miracles impeach
Our sloth—the dumb our duties
teach—

And he that gives the mute his
speech

Can bid the weak be strong. 790

To us as to our lords are given

A native earth, a promised heaven;

To us as to our lords belongs

The vengeance for our nation's
wrongs;

The choice 'twixt death or free-
dom warms

Our breasts as theirs—To arms!
to arms!

To arms they flew,—axe, club, or
spear,—

And mimic ensigns high they rear,

And, like a bannered host afar,

Bear down on England's wearied
war. 800

XXXI

Already scattered o'er the plain,
Reproof, command, and counsel
vain,

The rearward squadrons fled
amain

Or made but doubtful stay;—

But when they marked the seem-
ing show

Of fresh and fierce and marshalled
foe,

The boldest broke away.

O, give their hapless prince his
due!

In vain the royal Edward threw

His person mid the spears, 810
Cried, 'Fight!' to terror and de-
spair,

Menaced and wept and tore his
hair,

And cursed their caitiff fears;

Till Pembroke turned his bridle
rein

And forced him from the fatal
plain.

With them rode Argentine until
They gained the summit of the

hill,

But quitted there the train:—

'In yonder field a gage I left,

I must not live of fame bereft; 820

I needs must turn again.

Speed hence, my liege, for on your
trace

The fiery Douglas takes the chase,

I know his banner well.

God send my sovereign joy and
bliss,

And many a happier field than
this!—

Once more, my liege, farewell!

XXXII

Again he faced the battle-field,—

Wildly they fly, are slain, or yield,

'Now then,' he said, and couched
his spear, 830

'My course is run, the goal is near;

One effort more, one brave career,

Must close this race of mine.'

Then in his stirrups rising high,

He shouted loud his battle-cry,

'Saint James for Argentine!'

And of the bold pursuers four

The gallant knight from saddle
bore;

But not unharmed—a lance's
point

Has found his breastplate's loos-
ened joint, 840

An axe has razed his crest;

Yet still on Colonsay's fierce lord,

Who pressed the chase with gory
sword,

He rode with spear in rest,
And through his bloody tartans
bored

And through his gallant breast.
Nailed to the earth, the moun-
taineer

Yet writhed him up against the
spear,

And swung his broadsword
round!

Stirrup, steel-boot, and cuish gave
way 850

Beneath that blow's tremendous
sway,

The blood gushed from the
wound;

And the grim Lord of Colonsay

Hath turned him on the ground,
And laughed in death-pang that
his blade

The mortal thrust so well repaid.

XXXIII

Now toiled the Bruce, the battle
done,

To use his conquest boldly won;
And gave command for horse and
spear

To press the Southron's scattered
rear, 860

Nor let his broken force com-
bine,

When the war-cry of Argentine

Fell faintly on his ear;

'Save, save his life,' he cried, 'O,
save

The kind, the noble, and the
brave!'

The squadrons round free passage
gave,

The wounded knight drew near;
He raised his red-cross shield no
more,

Helm, cuish, and breastplate
streamed with gore, 869

Yet, as he saw the king advance,
He strove even then to couch his
lance —

The effort was in vain!

The spur-stroke failed to rouse the
horse;

Wounded and weary, in mid course
He stumbled on the plain.

Then foremost was the generous
Bruce

To raise his head, his helm to
loose; —

'Lord Earl, the day is thine!

My sovereign's charge and adverse
fate

Have made our meeting all too
late; 880

Yet this may Argentine

As boon from ancient comrade
crave —

A Christian's mass, a soldier's
grave.'

XXXIV

Bruce pressed his dying hand — its
grasp

Kindly replied; but, in his clasp,
It stiffened and grew cold —

'And, O farewell!' the victor cried,
'Of chivalry the flower and pride,
The arm in battle bold,

The courteous mien, the noble
race, 890

The stainless faith, the manly
face! —

Bid Ninian's convent light their
shrine

For late-wake of De Argentine.

O'er better knight on death-bier
laid

Torch never gleamed nor mass
was said!'

XXXV

Nor for De Argentine alone

Through Ninian's church these
torches shone

And rose the death-prayer's awful
tone.

That yellow lustre glimmered pale
On broken plate and bloodied

mail, 900

Rent crest and shattered coro-
net,

Of baron, earl, and banneret;

And the best names that England
knew

Claimed in the death-prayer dis-
mal due.

Yet mourn not, Land of Fame!
Though ne'er the Leopards on thy
shield

Retreated from so sad a field

Since Norman William came.

Of battles stern by Scotland lost;

Grudge not her victory ⁹¹¹

When for her freeborn rights she
strove;

Rights dear to all who freedom
love,

To none so dear as thee!

XXXVI

Turn we to Bruce whose curious
ear

Must from Fitz-Louis tidings hear;

With him a hundred voices tell

Of prodigy and miracle,

'For the mute page had spoke.'—

'Page!' said Fitz-Louis, 'rather
say ⁹²⁰

An angel sent from realms of day

To burst the English yoke.

I saw his plume and bonnet drop

When hurrying from the mountain
top;

A lovely brow, dark locks that
wave,

To his bright eyes new lustre gave,

A step as light upon the green,

As if his pinions waved unseen!'

'Spoke he with none?'—'With
none—one word

Burst when he saw the Island
Lord ⁹³⁰

Returning from the battle-field.'—

'What answer made the chief?'—

'He kneeled,

Durst not look up, but muttered
low

Some mingled sounds that none
might know,

And greeted him 'twixt joy and
fear

As being of superior sphere.'

XXXVII

Even upon Bannock's bloody plain
Heaped then with thousands of the
slain,

Mid victor monarch's musings
high,

Mirth laughed in good King Rob-
ert's eye:— ⁹⁴⁰

'And bore he such angelic air,

Such noble front, such waving
hair?

Hath Ronald kneeled to him?' he
said;

'Then must we call the church to
aid—

Our will be to the abbot known

Ere these strange news are wider
blown,

To Cambuskenneth straight he
pass

And deck the church for solemn
mass,

To pay for high deliverance given
A nation's thanks to gracious

Heaven. ⁹⁵⁰

Let him array besides such state,

As should on princes' nuptials
wait.

Ourself the cause, through for-
tune's spite,

That once broke short that spousal
rite,

Ourself will grace with early morn
The bridal of the Maid of Lorn.'

CONCLUSION

Go forth, my Song, upon thy
venturous way;

Go boldly forth; nor yet thy
master blame

Who chose no patron for his
humble lay,

And graced thy numbers with no
friendly name

Whose partial zeal might smooth
thy path to fame.

There was—and O, how many
sorrows crowd

Into these two brief words!—
there was a claim

By generous friendship given —
 had fate allowed,
 It well had bid thee rank the
 proudest of the proud !

All angel now — yet little less
 than all

While still a pilgrim in our world
 below !

What 'vails it us that patience
 to recall

Which hid its own to soothe all
 other woe ;

What 'vails to tell how Virtue's
 purest glow

Shone yet more lovely in a form
 so fair :

And, least of all, what 'vails the
 world should know

That one poor garland, twined
 to deck thy hair,

Is hung upon thy hearse to droop
 and wither there !

THE FIELD OF WATERLOO

Though Valois braved young Edward's gentle hand,
 And Albert rushed on Henry's way-worn band,
 With Europe's chosen sons, in arms renowned,
 Yet not on Vere's bold archers long they looked,
 Nor Audley's squires nor Mowbray's yeomen brooked, —
 They saw their standard fall, and left their monarch bound.

AKENSIDE.

TO

HER GRACE

THE

DUCHESS OF WELLINGTON

PRINCESS OF WATERLOO

&c., &c., &c.,

THE FOLLOWING VERSES

ARE MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED BY

THE AUTHOR

ADVERTISEMENT

It may be some apology for the imperfections of this poem, that it was composed hastily, and during a short tour upon the Continent, when the Author's labors were liable to frequent interruption ; but its best apology is, that it was written for the purpose of assisting the Waterloo Subscription.

ABBOTSFORD, 1815.

I

FAIR Brussels, thou art far behind,
Though, lingering on the morning
wind,

We yet may hear the hour
Pealed over orchard and canal,
With voice prolonged and measured fall,

From proud Saint Michael's
tower;
Thy wood, dark Soignies, holds us
now,

Where the tall beeches' glossy
bough

For many a league around,
With birch and darksome oak between, 10

Spreads deep and far a pathless
screen

Of tangled forest ground.
Stems planted close by stems defy
The adventurous foot—the curious
eye

For access seeks in vain;
And the brown tapestry of leaves,
Strewed on the blighted ground,
receives

Nor sun nor air nor rain.
No opening glade dawns on our
way,

No streamlet glancing to the ray
Our woodland path has crossed;
And the straight causeway which
we tread 22

Prolongs a line of dull arcade,
Unvarying through the unvaried
shade

Until in distance lost.

II

A brighter, livelier scene succeeds;

In groups the scattering wood
recedes,

Hedge-rows, and huts, and sunny
meads,

And corn-fields glance between;
The peasant at his labor blithe 30
Plies the hooked staff and shortened scythe:—

But when these ears were
green,
Placed close within destruction's
scope,

Full little was that rustic's hope
Their ripening to have seen!
And, lo! a hamlet and its fane:—
Let not the gazer with disdain
Their architecture view;

For yonder rude ungraceful shrine
And disproportioned spire are
thine, 40

Immortal WATERLOO!

III

Fear not the heat, though full and
high

The sun has scorched the autumn
sky,

And scarce a forest straggler now
To shade us spreads a greenwood
bough;

These fields have seen a hotter
day

Than e'er was fired by sunny ray.
Yet one mile on—yon shattered
hedge

Crests the soft hill whose long
smooth ridge

Looks on the field below, 50
And sinks so gently on the dale
That not the folds of Beauty's veil
In easier curves can flow.

Brief space from thence the
ground again

Ascending slowly from the plain
Forms an opposing screen,
Which with its crest of upland
ground

Shuts the horizon all around.

The softened vale between
Slopes smooth and fair for cours-
er's tread; 60

Not the most timid maid need
dread

To give her snow-white palfrey
head

On that wide stubble-ground;
Nor wood nor tree nor bush are
there,

Her course to intercept or scare,

Nor fosse nor fence are found,
Save where from out her shattered
bowers
Rise Hougomont's dismantled
towers.

IV

Now, see'st thou aught in this lone
scene
Can tell of that which late hath
been? — 70

A stranger might reply,
'The bare extent of stubble-plain;
Seems lately lightened of its grain
And yonder sable tracks remain
Marks of the peasant's ponderous
wain

When harvest home was nigh.
On these broad spots of trampled
ground
Perchance the rustics danced such
round

As Teniers loved to draw;
And where the earth seems
scorched by flame, 80
To dress the homely feast they
came,
And toiled the kerchiefed village
dame
Around her fire of straw.'

V

So deem'st thou — so each mortal
deems
Of that which is from that which
seems: —

But other harvest here
Than that which peasant's scythe
demands
Was gathered in by sterner hands,
With bayonet, blade, and spear.
No vulgar crop was theirs to reap,
No stinted harvest thin and cheap!
Heroes before each fatal sweep 92
Fell thick as ripened grain;
And ere the darkening of the
day,
Piled high as autumn shocks there
lay
The ghastly harvest of the fray,
The corpses of the slain.

VI

Ay, look again — that line so black
And trampled marks the biv-
ouac,

Yon deep-graved ruts the artil-
lery's track, 100

So often lost and won;
And close beside the hardened
mud

Still shows where, fetlock-deep in
blood,

The fierce dragoon through bat-
tle's flood

Dashed the hot war-horse on.
These spots of excavation tell
The ravage of the bursting shell —
And feel'st thou not the tainted
steam

That reeks against the sultry
beam 109

From yonder trenched mound?
The pestilential fumes declare
That Carnage has replenished
there

Her garner-house profound.

VII

Far other harvest-home and feast
Than claims the boor from scythe
released

On these scorched fields were
known!

Death hovered o'er the maddening
rout,

And in the thrilling battle-shout
Sent for the bloody banquet out

A summons of his own. 120

Through rolling smoke the De-
mon's eye

Could well each destined guest
espY,

Well could his ear in ecstasy
Distinguish every tone

That filled the chorus of the fray —
From cannon-roar and trumpet-
bray,

From charging squadrons' wild
hurra,

From the wild clang that marked
their way, —

Down to the dying groan

And the last sob of life's decay 130
When breath was all but flown.

VIII

Feast on, stern foe of mortal life,
Feast on! — but think not that a
strife
With such promiscuous carnage
rife

Protracted space may last;
The deadly tug of war at length
Must limits find in human strength,
And cease when these are past.
Vain hope! — that morn's o'er-
clouded sun

Heard the wild shout of fight be-
gun 140

Ere he attained his height,
And through the war-smoke vol-
umed high

Still peals that unremitted cry,
Though now he stoops to night.
For ten long hours of doubt and
dread,

Fresh succors from the extended
head

Of either hill the contest fed;
Still down the slope they drew,
The charge of columns paused
not,

Nor ceased the storm of shell and
shot; 150

For all that war could do
Of skill and force was proved that
day,

And turned not yet the doubtful
fray

On bloody Waterloo.

IX

Pale Brussels! then what thoughts
were thine,
When ceaseless from the distant
line

Continued thunders came!
Each burgher held his breath to
hear

These forerunners of havoc near,
Of rapine and of flame. 160

What ghastly sights were thine to
meet,

When, rolling through thy stately
street,

The wounded showed their man-
gled plight

In token of the unfinished fight,
And from each anguish-laden wain
The blood-drops laid thy dust like
rain!

How often in the distant drum
Heard'st thou the fell invader
come,

While Ruin, shouting to his band,
Shook high her torch and gory
brand! — 170

Cheer thee, fair city! From yon
stand

Impatient still his outstretched
hand

Points to his prey in vain,
While, maddening in his eager
mood

And all unwont to be withstood,
He fires the fight again.

X

'On! On!' was still his stern ex-
claim;

'Confront the battery's jaws of
flame!

Rush on the levelled gun! 179

My steel-clad cuirassiers, advance!
Each Hulan forward with his lance,
My Guard — my chosen — charge
for France,

France and Napoleon!
Loud answered their acclaiming
shout,

Greeting the mandate which sent
out

Their bravest and their best to
dare

The fate their leader shunned to
share.

But HE, his country's sword and
shield,

Still in the battle-front revealed
Where danger fiercest swept the
field, 190

Came like a beam of light,
In action prompt, in sentence
brief —

'Soldiers, stand firm!' exclaimed
the chief,
'England shall tell the fight!'

XI

On came the whirlwind — like the
last
But fiercest sweep of tempest-
blast —

On came the whirlwind — steel-
gleams broke
Like lightning through the rolling
smoke;

The war was waked anew,
Three hundred cannon - mouths
roared loud, ²⁰⁰
And from their throats with flash
and cloud

Their showers of iron threw.
Beneath their fire in full career
Rushed on the ponderous cuiras-
sier,

The lancer couched his ruthless
spear,
And hurrying as to havoc near
The cohorts' eagles flew.

In one dark torrent broad and
strong

The advancing onset rolled along,
Forth harbingered by fierce ac-
claim, ²¹⁰

That from the shroud of smoke
and flame

Pealed wildly the imperial name.

XII

But on the British heart were lost
The terrors of the charging host;
For not an eye the storm that
viewed

Changed its proud glance of forti-
tude,

Nor was one forward footstep
staid,

As dropped the dying and the
dead.

Fast as their ranks the thunders
tear,

Fast they renewed each serried
square; ²²⁰

And on the wounded and the slain

Closed their diminished files again,
Till from their line scarce spears'
lengths three

Emerging from the smoke they
see

Helmet and plume and panoply —
Then waked their fire at once!

Each musketeer's revolving knell,
As fast, as regularly fell,

As when they practise to display
Their discipline on festal day. ²³⁰

Then down went helm and lance,
Down were the eagle banners sent,

Down reeling steeds and riders
went,

Corselets were pierced and pen-
nons rent;

And to augment the fray,
Wheeled full against their stagger-
ing flanks,

The English horsemen's foaming
ranks

Forced their resistless way.
Then to the musket-knell succeeds

The clash of swords, the neigh of
steeds ²⁴⁰

As plies the smith his clanging
trade,

Against the cuirass rang the
blade;

And while amid their close array
The well-served cannon rent their

way,

And while amid their scattered
band

Raged the fierce rider's bloody
brand,

Recoiled in common rout and fear
Lancer and guard and cuirassier,

Horsemen and foot, — a mingled
host,

Their leaders fallen, their stand-
ards lost. ²⁵⁰

XIII

Then, WELLINGTON! thy piercing
eye

This crisis caught of destiny —
The British host had stood

That morn 'gainst charge of sword
and lance

As their own ocean rocks hold
stance,
But when thy voice had said, 'Advance!'

They were their ocean's flood. —
O thou whose inauspicious aim
Hath wrought thy host this hour
of shame,
Think'st thou thy broken bands
will bide 260

The terrors of yon rushing tide?
Or will thy chosen brook to feel
The British shock of levelled
steel?

Or dost thou turn thine eye
Where coming squadrons gleam
afar,
And fresher thunders wake the
war,

And other standards fly? —
Think not that in yon columns file
Thy conquering troops from distant
Dyle —

Is Blucher yet unknown? 270
Or dwells not in thy memory still,
Heard frequent in thine hour of ill,
What notes of hate and vengeance
thrill

In Prussia's trumpet tone? —
What yet remains? — shall it be
thine

To head the relics of thy line
In one dread effort more? —
The Roman lore thy leisure loved,
And thou canst tell what fortune
proved

That chieftain who of yore 280
Ambition's dizzy paths essayed,
And with the gladiators' aid

For empire enterprised —
He stood the cast his rashness
played,

Left not the victims he had made,
Dug his red grave with his own
blade,

And on the field he lost was laid,
Abhorred — but not despised.

XIV

But if revolves thy fainter thought
On safety — howsoever bought —

Then turn thy fearful rein and
ride, 291
Though twice ten thousand men
have died

On this eventful day,
To gild the military fame
Which thou for life in traffic tame
Wilt barter thus away.

Shall future ages tell this tale
Of inconsistency faint and frail?
And art thou he of Lodi's bridge,
Marengo's field, and Wagram's
ridge! 300

Or is thy soul like mountain-tide
That, swelled by winter storm and
shower,

Rolls down in turbulence of power
A torrent fierce and wide;
Reft of these aids, a rill obscure,
Shrinking unnoticed, mean and
poor,

Whose channel shows displayed
The wrecks of its impetuous
course,

But not one symptom of the force
By which these wrecks were
made! 310

XV

Spur on thy way! — since now
thine ear

Has brooked thy veterans' wish to
hear,

Who as thy flight they eyed
Exclaimed — while tears of anguish
came,

Wrung forth by pride and rage
and shame —

'O, that he had but died!'

But yet, to sum this hour of ill,
Look ere thou leavest the fatal
hill

Back on yon broken ranks —
Upon whose wild confusion gleams
The moon, as on the troubled
streams 321

When rivers break their banks,
And to the ruined peasant's eye
Objects half seen roll swiftly by,
Down the dread current hurled —
So mingle banner, wain, and gun,

Where the tumultuous flight rolls
on
Of warriors who when morn be-
gun
Defied a banded world.

XVI

List — frequent to the hurrying
rout, 330
The stern pursuers' vengeful
shout

Tells that upon their broken rear
Rages the Prussian's bloody spear.

So fell a shriek was none
When Beresina's icy flood
Reddened and thawed with flame
and blood

And, pressing on thy desperate
way,

Raised oft and long their wild
hurra

The children of the Don.

Thine ear no yell of horror cleft
So ominous when, all bereft 341

Of aid, the valiant Polack left —
Ay, left by thee — found soldier's
grave

In Leipsic's corpse-encumbered
wave.

Fate, in these various perils past,
Reserved thee still some future
cast;

On the dread die thou now hast
thrown

Hangs not a single field alone,
Nor one campaign — thy martial
fame,

Thy empire, dynasty, and name,
Have felt the final stroke; 351

And now o'er thy devoted head
Thy last stern vial's wrath is shed,
The last dread seal is broke.

XVII

Since live thou wilt — refuse not
now

Before these demagogues to bow,
Late objects of thy scorn and hate,
Who shall thy once imperial fate
Make wordy theme of vain de-
bate. —

Or shall we say thou stoop'st less
low 360

In seeking refuge from the foe,
Against whose heart in prosper-
ous life

Thine hand hath ever held the
knife?

Such homage hath been paid
By Roman and by Grecian voice,
And there were honor in the
choice,

If it were freely made.
Then safely come — in one so
low, —

So lost, — we cannot own a foe;
Though dear experience bid us
end, 370

In thee we ne'er can hall a
friend. —

Come, hows'oe'er — but do not hide
Close in thy heart that germ of
pride

Erewhile by gifted bard espied,
That 'yet imperial hope;' —
Think not that for a fresh re-
bound,

To raise ambition from the ground,
We yield thee means or scope.

In safety come — but ne'er again
Hold type of independent reign;
No islet calls thee lord, 381

We leave thee no confederate
band,

No symbol of thy lost command,
To be a dagger in the hand

From which we wrenched the
sword.

XVIII

Yet, even in yon sequestered spot,
May worthier conquest be thy lot

Than yet thy life has known;
Conquest unbought by blood or
harm,

That needs nor foreign aid nor
arm, 390

A triumph all thine own.
Such waits thee when thou shalt
control

Those passions wild, that stub-
born soul,

That marred thy prosperous
scene:—
Hear this — from no unmoved
heart,
Which sighs, comparing what
THOU ART
With what thou MIGHTST HAVE
BEEN!

XIX

Thou, too, whose deeds of fame
renewed
Bankrupt a nation's gratitude,
To thine own noble heart must
owe ⁴⁰⁰
More than the meed she can be-
stow.
For not a people's just acclaim,
Not the full hail of Europe's fame,
Thy prince's smiles, thy state's
decree,
The ducal rank, the gartered knee,
Not these such pure delight afford
As that, when hanging up thy
sword,
Well mayst thou think, ' This hon-
est steel
Was ever drawn for public weal;
And, such was rightful Heaven's
decree, ⁴¹⁰
Ne'er sheathed unless with vic-
tory!'

XX

Look forth once more with soft-
ened heart
Ere from the field of fame we
part;
Triumph and sorrow border near,
And joy oft melts into a tear.
Alas! what links of love that morn
Has War's rude hand asunder
torn!
For ne'er was field so sternly
fought,
And ne'er was conquest dearer
bought.
Here piled in common slaughter
sleep ⁴²⁰
Those whom affection long shall
weep:

Here rests the sire that ne'er shall
strain
His orphans to his heart again;
The son whom on his native shore
The parent's voice shall bless no
more;
The bridegroom who has hardly
pressed
His blushing consort to his breast;
The husband whom through many
a year
Long love and mutual faith en-
dear.
Thou canst not name one tender
tie ⁴³⁰
But here dissolved its relics lie!
O, when thou see'st some mourn-
er's veil
Shroud her thin form and visage
pale,
Or mark'st the matron's bursting
tears
Stream when the stricken drum
she hears,
Or see'st how manlier grief sup-
pressed
Is laboring in a father's breast, —
With no inquiry vain pursue
The cause, but think on Waterloo!

XXI

Period of honor as of woes, ⁴⁴⁰
What bright careers 't was thine
to close! —
Marked on thy roll of blood what
names
To Briton's memory and to Fame's
Laid there their last immortal
claims!
Thou saw'st in seas of gore expire
Redoubted PICTON's soul of fire —
Saw'st in the mingled carnage lie
All that of PONSONBY could die —
DE LANCEY change Love's bridal-
wreath
For laurels from the hand of
Death — ⁴⁵⁰
Saw'st gallant MILLER's failing
eye
Still bent where Albion's banners
fly,

And CAMERON in the shock of
steel
Die like the offspring of Lochiel;
And generous GORDON mid the
strife
Fall while he watched his leader's
life. —
Ah! though her guardian angel's
shield
Fenced Britain's hero through the
field,
Fate not the less her power made
known
Through his friends' hearts to
pierce his own! 460

XXII

Forgive, brave dead, the imperfect
lay!
Who may your names, your num-
bers, say?
What high-strung harp, what lofty
line,
To each the dear-earned praise
assign,
From high-born chiefs of martial
fame
To the poor soldier's lowlier name;
Lightly ye rose that dawning day
From your cold couch of swamp
and clay,
To fill before the sun was low
The bed that morning cannot
know. — 470
Oft may the tear the green sod
steep,
And sacred be the heroes' sleep
Till time shall cease to run;
And ne'er beside their noble grave
May Briton pass and fail to crave
A blessing on the fallen brave
Who fought with Wellington!

XXIII

Farewell, sad field! whose blighted
face
Wears desolation's withering
trace;
Long shall my memory retain 480
Thy shattered huts and trampled
grain,

With every mark of martial wrong,
That scathe thy towers, fair Hou-
gomont!
Yet though thy garden's green ar-
cade
The marksman's fatal post was
made,
Though on thy shattered beeches
fell
The blended rage of shot and
shell,
Though from thy blackened por-
tals torn
Their fall thy blighted fruit-trees
mourn,
Has not such havoc bought a
name 490
Immortal in the rolls of fame?
Yes — Agincourt may be forgot,
And Cressy be an unknown spot,
And Blenheim's name be new;
But still in story and in song,
For many an age remembered long,
Shall live the towers of Houg-
omont
And Field of Waterloo.

CONCLUSION

STERN tide of human time! that
know'st not rest,
But, sweeping from the cradle
to the tomb,
Bear'st ever downward on thy
dusky breast
Successive generations to their
doom;
While thy capacious stream has
equal room
For the gay bark where Plea-
sure's streamers sport
And for the prison-ship of guilt
and gloom,
The fisher-skiff and barge that
bears a court,
Still wafting onward all to one
dark silent port; —
Stern tide of time! through what
mysterious change 10

Of hope and fear have our frail
 barks been driven !
 For ne'er before vicissitude so
 strange
 Was to one race of Adam's off-
 spring given.
 And sure such varied change of
 sea and heaven,
 Such unexpected bursts of joy
 and woe,
 Such fearful strife as that where
 we have striven,
 Succeeding ages ne'er again shall
 know
 Until the awful term when thou
 shalt cease to flow.

Well hast thou stood, my Coun-
 try! — the brave fight
 Hast well maintained through
 good report and ill: 20
 In thy just cause and in thy na-
 tive might,
 And in Heaven's grace and jus-
 tice constant still;
 Whether the banded prowess,
 strength, and skill
 Of half the world against thee
 stood arrayed,
 Or when with better views and
 freer will
 Beside thee Europe's noblest
 drew the blade,
 Each emulous in arms the Ocean
 Queen to aid.

Well art thou now repaid —
 though slowly rose,
 And struggled long with mists
 thy blaze of fame,
 While like the dawn that in the
 orient glows 30
 On the broad wave its earlier
 lustre came;
 Then eastern Egypt saw the
 growing flame,

And Maida's myrtles gleamed
 beneath its ray,
 Where first the soldier, stung
 with generous shame,
 Rivalled the heroes of the wa-
 tery way,
 And washed in foemen's gore un-
 just reproach away.

Now, Island Empress, wave thy
 crest on high,
 And bid the banner of thy Pa-
 tron flow,
 Gallant Saint George, the flower
 of chivalry,
 For thou hast faced like him a
 dragon foe, 40
 And rescued innocence from
 overthrow,
 And trampled down like him
 tyrannic might,
 And to the gazing world mayst
 proudly show
 The chosen emblem of thy
 sainted knight,
 Who quelled devouring pride and
 vindicated right.

Yet mid the confidence of just
 renown,
 Renown dear-bought, but dear-
 est thus acquired,
 Write, Britain, write the moral
 lesson down:
 'T is not alone the heart with
 valor fired,
 The discipline so dreaded and
 admired, 50
 In many a field of bloody con-
 quest known; —
 Such may by fame be lured, by
 gold be hired —
 'T is constancy in the good cause
 alone
 Best justifies the meed thy valiant
 sons have won.

HAROLD THE DAUNTLESS

A POEM IN SIX CANTOS

INTRODUCTION

THERE is a mood of mind we all have known
 On drowsy eve or dark and lowering day,
 When the tired spirits lose their sprightly tone
 And naught can chase the lingering hours away.
 Dull on our soul falls Fancy's dazzling ray,
 And Wisdom holds his steadier torch in vain,
 Obscured the painting seems, mistuned the lay,
 Nor dare we of our listless load complain,
 For who for sympathy may seek that cannot tell of pain ?

The jolly sportsman knows such drearihood
 When bursts in deluge the autumnal rain,
 Clouding that morn which threatens the heath-cock's brood ;
 Of such in summer's drought the anglers plain,
 Who hope the soft mild southern shower in vain ;
 But more than all the discontented fair,
 Whom father stern and sterner aunt restrain
 From county-ball or race occurring rare,
 While all her friends around their vestments gay prepare.

Ennui ! — or, as our mothers called thee, Spleen !
 To thee we owe full many a rare device ; —
 Thine is the sheaf of painted cards, I ween,
 The rolling billiard-ball, the rattling dice,
 The turning-lathe for framing gimcrack nice ;
 The amateur's blotched pallet thou mayst claim,
 Retort, and air-pump, threatening frogs and mice —
 Murders disguised by philosophic name —
 And much of trifling grave and much of buxom game.

Then of the books to catch thy drowsy glance
 Compiled, what bard the catalogue may quote !
 Plays, poems, novels, never read but once ; —
 But not of such the tale fair Edgeworth wrote,
 That bears thy name and is thine antidote ;
 And not of such the strain my Thomson sung,
 Delicious dreams inspiring by his note,
 What time to Indolence his harp he strung ; —
 O, might my lay be ranked that happier list among !

Each hath his refuge whom thy cares assail.
 For me, I love my study fire to trim,
 And con right vacantly some idle tale,
 Displaying on the couch each listless limb,

Till on the drowsy page the lights grow dim
 And doubtful slumber half supplies the theme;
 While antique shapes of knight and giant grim,
 Damsel and dwarf, in long procession gleam,
 And the romancer's tale becomes the reader's dream.

'T is thus my malady I well may bear,
 Albeit outstretched, like Pope's own Paridel,
 Upon the rack of a too-easy chair;
 And find to cheat the time a powerful spell
 In old romaunts of errantry that tell, 50
 Or later legends of the Fairy-folk,
 Or Oriental tale of Afrite fell,
 Of Genii, Talisman, and broad-winged Roc,
 Though taste may blush and frown, and sober reason mock.

Oft at such season too will rhymes unsought
 Arrange themselves in some romantic lay,
 The which, as things unfitting graver thought,
 Are burnt or blotted on some wiser day. —
 These few survive — and, proudly let me say,
 Court not the critic's smile nor dread his frown; 60
 They well may serve to while an hour away,
 Nor does the volume ask for more renown
 Than Ennui's yawning smile, what time she drops it down.

CANTO FIRST

I

List to the valorous deeds that
 were done
 By Harold the Dauntless, Count
 Witikind's son!

Count Witikind came of a regal
 strain,
 And roved with his Norsemen the
 land and the main.

Woe to the realms which he
 coasted! for there
 Was shedding of blood and rend-
 ing of hair,

Rape of maiden and slaughter of
 priest,

Gathering of ravens and wolves to
 the feast:

When he hoisted his standard
 black,

Before him was battle, behind him
 wrack, 10

And he burned the churches, that
 heathen Dane,
 To light his band to their barks
 again.

II

On Erin's shores was his outrage
 known,

The winds of France had his ban-
 ners blown;

Little was there to plunder, yet
 still

His pirates had forayed on Scot-
 tish hill:

But upon merry England's coast
 More frequent he sailed, for he
 won the most.

So wide and so far his ravage they
 knew,

If a sail but gleamed white 'gainst
 the welkin blue, 20

Trumpet and bugle to arms did
 call,

Burghers hastened to man the
 wall,

Peasants fled inland his fury to
 'scape,
 Beacons were lighted on headland
 and cape,
 Bells were tolled out, and aye as
 they rung
 Fearful and faintly the gray bro-
 thers sung,
 ' Bless us, Saint Mary, from flood
 and from fire,
 From famine and pest, and Count
 Witikind's ire !'

III

He liked the wealth of fair Eng-
 land so well
 That he sought in her bosom as
 native to dwell. 30
 He entered the Humber in fearful
 hour
 And disembarked with his Danish
 power.
 Three earls came against him with
 all their train, —
 Two hath he taken and one hath
 he slain.
 Count Witikind left the Humber's
 rich strand,
 And he wasted and warred in
 Northumberland.
 But the Saxon king was a sire in
 age,
 Weak in battle, in council sage ;
 Peace of that heathen leader he
 sought,
 Gifts he gave and quiet he bought :
 And the count took upon him the
 peaceable style 41
 Of a vassal and liegeman of Brit-
 on's broad isle.

IV

Time will rust the sharpest sword,
 Time will consume the strongest
 cord ;
 That which moulders hemp and
 steel
 Mortal arm and nerve must
 feel.
 Of the Danish band whom Count
 Witikind led

Many waxed aged and many were
 dead :
 Himself found his armor full
 weighty to bear,
 Wrinkled his brows grew and
 hoary his hair ; 50
 He leaned on a staff when his step
 went abroad,
 And patient his palfrey when
 steed he bestrode.
 As he grew feeblér, his wildness
 ceased,
 He made himself peace with pre-
 late and priest,
 Made his peace, and stooping his
 head
 Patiently listed the counsel they
 said :
 Saint Cuthbert's Bishop was holy
 and grave,
 Wise and good was the counsel he
 gave.

V

' Thou hast murdered, robbed, and
 spoiled,
 Time it is thy poor soul were as-
 soiled ; 60
 Priests didst thou slay and
 churches burn,
 Time it is now to repentance to
 turn ;
 Fiends hast thou worshipped with
 fiendish rite,
 Leave now the darkness and wend
 into light :
 O, while life and space are given,
 Turn thee yet, and think of Hea-
 ven !'
 That stern old heathen his head
 he raised,
 And on the good prelate he stead-
 fastly gazed ;
 ' Give me broad lands on the Wear
 and the Tyne,
 My faith I will leave and I'll
 cleave unto thine.' 70

VI

Broad lands he gave him on Tyne
 and Wear,

To be held of the church by bridle
and spear,

Part of Monkwearmouth, of Tyne-
dale part,

To better his will and to soften his
heart:

Count Witikind was a joyful man,
Less for the faith than the lands
that he wan.

The high church of Durham is
dressed for the day,

The clergy are ranked in their sol-
emn array:

There came the count, in a bear-
skin warm,

Leaning on Hilda his concubine's
arm. 80

He kneeled before Saint Cuthbert's
shrine

With patience unwonted at rites
divine;

He abjured the gods of heathen
race

And he bent his head at the font
of grace.

But such was the grisly old prose-
lyte's look,

That the priest who baptized him
grew pale and shook;

And the old monks muttered be-
neath their hood,

'Of a stem so stubborn can never
spring good!'

VII

Up then arose that grim convert-
ite,

Homeward he hied him when
ended the rite; 90

The prelate in honor will with him
ride

And feast in his castle on Tyne's
fair side.

Banners and banderols danced in
the wind,

Monks rode before them and spear-
men behind;

Onward they passed, till fairly did
shine

Pennon and cross on the bosom of
Tyne;

And full in front did that fortress
lour

In darksome strength with its but-
tress and tower:

At the castle gate was young Har-
old there,

Count Witikind's only offspring
and heir. 100

VIII

Young Harold was feared for his
hardihood,

His strength of frame and his fury
of mood.

Rude he was and wild to be-
hold,

Wore neither collar nor bracelet
of gold,

Cap of vair nor rich array,
Such as should grace that festal
day:

His doublet of bull's hide was all
unbraced,

Uncovered his head and his sandal
unlaced:

His shaggy black locks on his
brow hung low,

And his eyes glanced through
them a swarthy glow; 110

A Danish club in his hand he
bore,

The spikes were clotted with re-
cent gore;

At his back a she-wolf and her
wolf-cubs twain,

In the dangerous chase that morn-
ing slain.

Rude was the greeting his father
he made,

None to the bishop, — while thus
he said: —

IX

'What priest-led hypocrite art
thou

With thy humbled look and thy
monkish brow,

Like a shaveling who studies to
cheat his vow?

Canst thou be Witikind the Waster
known, 120

Royal Eric's fearless son,
 Haughty Gunhilda's haughtier
 lord,
 Who won his bride by the axe and
 sword;
 From the shrine of Saint Peter the
 chalice who tore,
 And melted to bracelets for Freya
 and Thor;
 With one blow of his gauntlet who
 burst the skull,
 Before Odin's stone, of the Moun-
 tain Bull?
 Then ye worshipped with rites
 that to war-gods belong,
 With the deed of the brave and
 the blow of the strong;
 And now, in thine age to dotage
 sunk,
 Wilt thou patter thy crimes to a
 shaven monk,
 Lay down thy mail-shirt for cloth-
 ing of hair, —
 Fasting and scourge, like a slave,
 wilt thou bear?
 Or, at best, be admitted in slothful
 bower
 To batten with priest and with
 paramour?
 O, out upon thine endless shame!
 Each Scald's high harp shall blast
 thy fame,
 And thy son will refuse thee a
 father's name!'

X

Ireful waxed old Witikind's look,
 His faltering voice with fury
 shook: —
 'Hear me, Harold of hardened
 heart!
 Stubborn and wilful ever thou
 wert.
 Thine outrage insane I command
 thee to cease,
 Fear my wrath and remain at
 peace: —
 Just is the debt of repentance I've
 paid,
 Richly the church has a recom-
 pense made,

And the truth of her doctrines I
 prove with my blade,
 But reckoning to none of my ac-
 tions I owe,
 And least to my son such account-
 ing will show.
 Why speak I to thee of repentance
 or truth,
 Who ne'er from thy childhood
 knew reason or ruth?
 Hence! to the wolf and the bear
 in her den;
 These are thy mates, and not ra-
 tional men.'

XI

Grimly smiled Harold and coldly
 replied,
 'We must honor our sires, if we
 fear when they chide.
 For me, I am yet what thy lessons
 have made,
 I was rocked in a buckler and fed
 from a blade;
 An infant, was taught to clasp
 hands and to shout
 From the roofs of the tower when
 the flame had broke out;
 In the blood of slain foemen my
 finger to dip,
 And tinge with its purple my
 cheek and my lip. —
 'T is thou know'st not truth, that
 hast bartered in eld
 For a price the brave faith that
 thine ancestors held.
 When this wolf' — and the carcass
 he flung on the plain —
 'Shall awake and give food to her
 nurslings again,
 The face of his father will Harold
 review;
 Till then, aged heathen, young
 Christian, adieu!'

XII

Priest, monk, and prelate stood
 aghast,
 As through the pageant the
 heathen passed.

A cross-bearer out of his saddle
 he flung, 170
 Laid his hand on the pommel and
 into it sprung.
 Loud was the shriek and deep the
 groan
 When the holy sign on the earth
 was thrown!
 The fierce old count unsheathed
 his brand,
 But the calmer prelate stayed his
 hand.
 'Let him pass free!—Heaven
 knows its hour,—
 But he must own repentance's
 power,
 Pray and weep, and penance
 bear,
 Ere he hold land by the Tyne and
 the Wear.'
 Thus in scorn and in wrath from
 his father is gone 180
 Young Harold the Dauntless,
 Count Witikind's son.

XIII

High was the feasting in Witi-
 kind's hall,
 Revelled priests, soldiers, and pa-
 gans, and all;
 And e'en the good bishop was fain
 to endure
 The scandal which time and in-
 struction might cure:
 It were dangerous, he deemed, at
 the first to restrain
 In his wine and his wassail a half-
 christened Dane.
 The mead flowed around and the
 ale was drained dry,
 Wild was the laughter, the song,
 and the cry;
 With Kyrie Eleison came clamor-
 ously in 190
 The war-songs of Danesmen, Nor-
 weyan, and Finn,
 Till man after man the contention
 gave o'er,
 Outstretched on the rushes that
 strewed the hall floor;

And the tempest within, having
 ceased its wild rout,
 Gave place to the tempest that
 thundered without.

XIV

Apart from the wassail in turret
 alone
 Lay flaxen-haired Gunnar, old
 Ermengarde's son;
 In the train of Lord Harold that
 page was the first,
 For Harold in childhood had Er-
 mengarde nursed;
 And grieved was young Gunnar
 his master should roam, 200
 Unhoused and unfriended, an exile
 from home.
 He heard the deep thunder, the
 plashing of rain,
 He saw the red lightning through
 shot-hole and pane;
 'And O!' said the page, 'on the
 shelterless wold
 Lord Harold is wandering in dark-
 ness and cold!
 What though he was stubborn and
 wayward and wild,
 He endured me because I was
 Ermengarde's child,
 And often from dawn till the set
 of the sun
 In the chase by his stirrup un-
 bidden I run;
 I would I were older, and knight-
 hood could bear, 210
 I would soon quit the banks of the
 Tyne and the Wear:
 For my mother's command with
 her last parting breath
 Bade me follow her nursling in life
 and to death.

XV

'It pours and it thunders, it light-
 ens amain,
 As if Lok the Destroyer had burst
 from his chain!
 Accursed by the church and ex-
 pelled by his sire,

Nor Christian nor Dane give him
 shelter or fire,
 And this tempest what mortal may
 houseless endure ?
 Unaided, unmantled, he dies on
 the moor !
 Whate'er comes of Gunnar, he tar-
 ries not here.' ²²⁰
 He leapt from his couch and he
 grasped to his spear,
 Sought the hall of the feast. Un-
 disturbed by his tread,
 The wassailers slept fast as the
 sleep of the dead :
 ' Ungrateful and bestial ! ' his an-
 ger broke forth,
 ' To forget mid your goblets the
 pride of the North !
 And you, ye cowed priests who
 have plenty in store,
 Must give Gunnar for ransom a
 palfrey and ore.'

XVI

Then, heeding full little of ban or
 of curse,
 He has seized on the Prior of Jor-
 vaux's purse :
 Saint Menholt's Abbot next morn-
 ing has missed ²³⁰
 His mantle, deep furred from the
 cape to the wrist :
 The seneschal's keys from his belt
 he has ta'en —
 Well drenched on that eve was old
 Hildebrand's brain —
 To the stable-yard he made his way
 And mounted the bishop's palfrey
 gay,
 Castle and hamlet behind him has
 cast
 And right on his way to the moor-
 land has passed.
 Sore snorted the palfrey, unused
 to face
 A weather so wild at so rash a
 pace ;
 So long he snorted, so long he
 neighed, ²⁴⁰
 There answered a steed that was
 bound beside,

And the red flash of lightning
 showed there where lay
 His master, Lord Harold, out-
 stretched on the clay.

XVII

Up he started and thundered out,
 ' Stand !'
 And raised the club in his deadly
 hand.
 The flaxen-haired Gunnar his pur-
 pose told,
 Showed the palfrey and proffered
 the gold.
 ' Back, back, and home, thou sim-
 ple boy !
 Thou canst not share my grief or
 joy :
 Have I not marked thee wail and
 cry ²⁵⁰
 When thou hast seen a sparrow
 die ?
 And canst thou, as my follower
 should,
 Wade ankle-deep through foe-
 man's blood,
 Dare mortal and immortal foe,
 The gods above, the fiends below,
 And man on earth, more hateful
 still,
 The very fountain-head of ill ?
 Desperate of life and careless of
 death,
 Lover of bloodshed and slaughter
 and scathe,
 Such must thou be with me to
 roam, ²⁶⁰
 And such thou canst not be —
 back, and home !'

XVIII

Young Gunnar shook like an aspen
 bough,
 As he heard the harsh voice and
 beheld the dark brow,
 And half he repented his purpose
 and vow.
 But now to draw back were boot-
 less shame,
 And he loved his master, so urged
 his claim :

'Alas! if my arm and my courage
 be weak,
 Bear with me awhile for old Er-
 mengarde's sake;
 Nor deem so lightly of Gunnar's
 faith
 As to fear he would break it for
 peril of death. 270
 Have I not risked it to fetch thee
 this gold,
 This surcoat and mantle to fence
 thee from cold?
 And, did I bear a baser mind,
 What lot remains if I stay be-
 hind?
 The priests' revenge, thy father's
 wrath,
 A dungeon, and a shameful death.'

XIX

With gentler look Lord Harold
 eyed
 The page, then turned his head
 aside;
 And either a tear did his eyelash
 stain,
 Or it caught a drop of the passing
 rain. 280
 'Art thou an outcast, then?'
 quoth he;
 'The meeter page to follow me.'
 'T were bootless to tell what
 climes they sought,
 Ventures achieved, and battles
 fought;
 How oft with few, how oft alone,
 Fierce Harold's arm the field hath
 won.
 Men swore his eye, that flashed so
 red
 When each other glance was
 quenched with dread,
 Bore oft a light of deadly flame
 That ne'er from mortal courage
 came. 290
 Those limbs so strong, that mood
 so stern,
 That loved the couch of heath and
 fern,
 Afar from hamlet, tower, and town,
 More than to rest on driven down;

That stubborn frame, that sullen
 mood,
 Men deemed must come of aught
 but good;
 And they whispered the great
 Master Fiend was at one
 With Harold the Dauntless, Count
 Witikind's son.

XX

Years after years had gone and
 fled,
 The good old prelate lies lapped
 in lead; 300
 In the chapel still is shown
 His sculptured form on a marble
 stone,
 With staff and ring and scapu-
 laire,
 And folded hands in the act of
 prayer.
 Saint Cuthbert's mitre is resting
 now
 On the haughty Saxon, bold Aldin-
 gar's brow;
 The power of his crosier he loved
 to extend
 O'er whatever would break or
 whatever would bend;
 And now hath he clothed him in
 cope and in pall,
 And the Chapter of Durham has
 met at his call. 310
 'And hear ye not, brethren,' the
 proud bishop said,
 'That our vassal, the Danish Count
 Witikind's dead?
 All his gold and his goods hath he
 given
 To holy Church for the love of
 Heaven,
 And hath founded a chantry with
 stipend and dole
 That priests and that beadsmen
 may pray for his soul:
 Harold his son is wandering
 abroad,
 Dreaded by man and abhorred by
 God;
 Meet it is not that such should
 heir

The lands of the Church on the
 Tyne and the Wear, ³²⁰
 And at her pleasure her hallowed
 hands
 May now resume these wealthy
 lands.'

XXI

Answered good Eustace, a canon
 old, —
 'Harold is tameless and furious
 and bold;
 Ever Renown blows a note of
 fame
 And a note of fear when she sounds
 his name:
 Much of bloodshed and much of
 scathe
 Have been their lot who have
 waked his wrath.
 Leave him these lands and lord-
 ships still,
 Heaven in its hour may change his
 will; ³³⁰
 But if reft of gold and of living
 bare,
 An evil counsellor is despair.'
 More had he said, but the prelate
 frowned,
 And murmured his brethren who
 sate around,
 And with one consent have they
 given their doom
 That the Church should the lands
 of Saint Cuthbert resume.
 So willed the prelate; and canon
 and dean
 Gave to his judgment their loud
 amen.

CANTO SECOND

I

'Tis merry in greenwood — thus
 runs the old lay —
 In the gladsome month of lively
 May,
 When the wild birds' song on stem
 and spray
 Invites to forest bower;

Then rears the ash his airy crest,
 Then shines the birch in silver
 vest,
 And the beech in glistening leaves
 is drest,
 And dark between shows the oak's
 proud breast
 Like a chieftain's frowning
 tower;
 Though a thousand branches join
 their screen, ¹⁰
 Yet the broken sunbeams glance
 between
 And tip the leaves with lighter
 green,
 With brighter tints the flower:
 Dull is the heart that loves not
 then
 The deep recess of the wildwood
 glen,
 Where roe and red-deer find shel-
 tering den
 When the sun is in his power.

II

Less merry perchance is the fading
 leaf
 That follows so soon on the gath-
 ered sheaf
 When the greenwood loses the
 name; ²⁰
 Silent is then the forest bound,
 Save the redbreast's note and the
 rustling sound
 Of frost-nipt leaves that are drop-
 ping round,
 Or the deep-mouthed cry of the
 distant hound
 That opens on his game:
 Yet then too I love the forest wide,
 Whether the sun in splendor ride
 And gild its many-colored side,
 Or whether the soft and silvery
 haze
 In vapory folds o'er the landscape
 strays, ³⁰
 And half involves the woodland
 maze,
 Like an early widow's veil,
 Where wimpling tissue from the
 gaze

The form half hides and half be-
trays
Of beauty wan and pale.

III

Fair Metelill was a woodland maid,
Her father a rover of greenwood
shade,

By forest statutes undismayed,
Who lived by bow and quiver;
Well known was Wulfstane's
archery 40

By merry Tyne both on moor and
lea,

Through wooded Weardale's glens
so free,

Well beside Stanhope's wildwood
tree,

And well on Ganlesse river.
Yet free though he trespassed on
woodland game,

More known and more feared was
the wizard fame

Of Jutta of Rookhope, the Outlaw's
dame;

Feared when she frowned was her
eye of flame,

More feared when in wrath she
laughed;

For then, 'twas said, more fatal
true 50

To its dread aim her spell-glance
flew

Than when from Wulfstane's
bended yew

Sprung forth the gray-goose
shaft.

IV

Yet had this fierce and dreaded
pair,

So Heaven decreed, a daughter
fair;

None brighter crowned the bed,
In Britain's bounds, of peer or
prince,

Nor hath perchance a lovelier
since

In this fair isle been bred. 59

And naught of fraud or ire or ill
Was known to gentle Metelill,—

A simple maiden she;
The spells in dimpled smile that
lie,

And a downcast blush, and the
darts that fly

With the sidelong glance of a hazel
eye,

Were her arms and witchery.
So young, so simple was she yet,
She scarce could childhood's joys
forget,

And still she loved, in secret set
Beneath the greenwood tree, 70
To plait the rushy coronet
And braid with flowers her locks
of jet,

As when in infancy;—
Yet could that heart so simple
prove

The early dawn of stealing love:
Ah! gentle maid, beware!

The power who, now so mild a
guest,

Gives dangerous yet delicious zest
To the calm pleasures of thy
breast,

Will soon, a tyrant o'er the rest, 80
Let none his empire share.

V

One morn in kirtle green arrayed
Deep in the wood the maiden
strayed,

And where a fountain sprung
She sate her down unseen to thread

The scarlet berry's mimic braid,
And while the beads she strung,
Like the blithe lark whose carol
gay

Gives a good-morrow to the day,
So lightsomely she sung. 90

VI

SONG

'Lord William was born in gilded
bower,

The heir of Wilton's lofty tower;
Yet better loves Lord William now
To roam beneath wild Rookhope's
brow;

And William has lived where
ladies fair
With gawds and jewels deck their
hair,
Yet better loves the dewdrops still
That pearl the locks of Metelill.

'The pious palmer loves, I wis,
Saint Cuthbert's hallowed beads
to kiss; 100

But I, though simple girl I be,
Might have such homage paid to
me;

For did Lord William see me suit
This necklace of the bramble's
fruit,

He fain — but must not have his
will —

Would kiss the beads of Metelill.

'My nurse has told me many a tale,
How vows of love are weak and
frail;

My mother says that courtly youth
By rustic maid means seldom
sooth. 110

What should they mean? it cannot
be

That such a warning's meant for
me,

For naught — O, naught of fraud
or ill

Can William mean to Metelill!'

VII

Sudden she stops — and starts to
feel

A weighty hand, a glove of steel,
Upon her shrinking shoulders
laid;

Fearful she turned, and saw dis-
mayed

A knight in plate and mail ar-
rayed,

His crest and bearing worn and
frayed, 120

His surcoat soiled and riven,
Formed like that giant race of
yore

Whose long-continued crimes out-
wore

The sufferance of Heaven.
Stern accents made his pleasure
known,
Though then he used his gentlest
tone:
'Maiden,' he said, 'sing forth thy
glee.
Start not — sing on — it pleases
me.'

VIII

Secured within his powerful hold,
To bend her knee, her hands to
fold, 130

Was all the maiden might;
And 'O, forgive,' she faintly said,
'The terrors of a simple maid,

If thou art mortal wight!
But if — of such strange tales are
told —

Unearthly warrior of the wold,
Thou comest to chide mine accents
bold,

My mother, Jutta, knows the spell
At noon and midnight pleasing
well

The disembodied ear; 140
O, let her powerful charms atone
For aught my rashness may have
done,

And cease thy grasp of fear.'
Then laughed the knight — his
laughter's sound

Half in the hollow helmet drowned;
His barred visor then he raised,

And steady on the maiden gazed.
He smoothed his brows, as best he
might,

To the dread calm of autumn
night, 149

When sinks the tempest roar,
Yet still the cautious fishers eye
The clouds and fear the gloomy
sky,

And haul their barks on shore.

IX

'Damsel,' he said, 'be wise, and
learn
Matters of weight and deep con-
cern.'

From distant realms I come,
And wanderer long at length have
planned
In this my native Northern land
To seek myself a home. 159
Nor that alone — a mate I seek;
She must be gentle, soft, and
meek, —

No lordly dame for me;
Myself am something rough of
mood

And feel the fire of royal blood,
And therefore do not hold it good
To match in my degree.
Then, since coy maidens say my
face

Is harsh, my form devoid of grace,
For a fair lineage to provide 169
'T is meet that my selected bride
In lineaments be fair;
I love thine well — till now I ne'er
Looked patient on a face of fear,
But now that tremulous sob and
tear

Become thy beauty rare.
One kiss — nay, damsel, coy it
not! —

And now go seek thy parents' cot,
And say a bridegroom soon I
come
To woo my love and bear her
home.'

X

Home sprung the maid without a
pause, 180
As leveret 'scaped from grey-
hound's jaws;
But still she locked, howe'er dis-
tressed,
The secret in her boding breast;
Dreading her sire, who oft for-
bade
Her steps should stray to distant
glade.
Night came — to her accustomed
nook

Her distaff aged Jutta took,
And by the lamp's imperfect glow
Rough Wulfstane trimmed his
shafts and bow.

Sudden and clamorous from the
ground 190

Upstart slumbering brach and
hound;

Loud knocking next the lodge
alarms

And Wulfstane snatches at his
arms,

When open flew the yielding door
And that grim warrior pressed the
floor.

XI

'All peace be here — What! none
replies?

Dismiss your fears and your sur-
prise.

'T is I — that maid hath told my
tale, —

Or, trembler, did thy courage fail?
It recks not — it is I demand 200

Fair Metelill in marriage band;
Harold the Dauntless I, whose
name

Is brave men's boast and caitiffs'
shame.'

The parents sought each other's
eyes

With awe, resentment, and sur-
prise:

Wulfstane, to quarrel prompt, be-
gan

The stranger's size and thews to
scan;

But as he scanned his courage
sunk,

And from unequal strife he shrunk,
Then forth to blight and blemish
flies 210

The harmful curse from Jutta's
eyes;

Yet, fatal howsoe'er, the spell
On Harold innocently fell!

And disappointment and amaze
Were in the witch's wildered
gaze.

XII

But soon the wit of woman woke,
And to the warrior mild she spoke:
'Her child was all too young.' — 'A
toy,

The refuge of a maiden coy.
Again, 'A powerful baron's heir
Claims in her heart an interest
fair.'

221

'A trifle — whisper in his ear
That Harold is a suitor here!' —
Baffled at length she sought de-
lay:

'Would not the knight till morn-
ing stay?

Late was the hour — he there
might rest

Till morn, their lodge's honored
guest.'

Such were her words — her craft
might cast

Her honored guest should sleep
his last:

'No, not to-night — but soon,' he
swore,

230

'He would return, nor leave them
more.'

The threshold then his huge stride
crost,

And soon he was in darkness lost.

XIII

Appalled awhile the parents stood,
Then changed their fear to angry
mood,

And foremost fell their words of ill
On unresisting Metelill:

Was she not cautioned and forbid,
Forewarned, implored, accused,
and chid,

And must she still to greenwood
roam

240

To marshal such misfortune
home?

'Hence, minion — to thy chamber
hence —

There prudence learn and peni-
tence.'

She went — her lonely couch to
steep

In tears which absent lovers
weep;

Or if she gained a troubled sleep,
Fierce Harold's suit was still the
theme

And terror of her feverish dream.

XIV

Scarce was she gone, her dame
and sire

Upon each other bent their ire; 250
'A woodsman thou and hast a
spear,

And couldst thou such an insult
bear?'

Sullen he said, 'A man contends
With men, a witch with sprites and
fiends;

Not to mere mortal wight belong
Yon gloomy brow and frame so
strong.

But thou — is this thy promise
fair,

That your Lord William, wealthy
heir

To Ulrick, Baron of Witton-le-
Wear,

Should Metelill to altar bear? 260
Do all the spells thou boast'st as
thine

Serve but to slay some peasant's
kine,

His grain in autumn's storms to
steep,

Or thorough fog and fen to sweep
And hag-ride some poor rustic's
sleep?

Is such mean mischief worth the
fame

Of sorceress and witch's name?
Fame, which with all men's wish
conspires

With thy deserts and my desires,
To damn thy corpse to penal
fires?

270

Out on thee, witch! aroint! aroint!
What now shall put thy schemes
in joint?

What save this trusty arrow's
point,

From the dark dingle when it flies
And he who meets it gasps and
dies?'

XV

Stern she replied, 'I will not wage
War with thy folly or thy rage;
But ere the morrow's sun be low,

Wulfstane of Rookhope, thou shalt know

If I can venge me on a foe. 280
Believe the while that whatsoe'er
I spoke in ire of bow and spear,
It is not Harold's destiny
The death of pilfered deer to die.
But he, and thou, and yon pale
moon —

That shall be yet more pallid
soon,

Before she sink behind the dell —
Thou, she, and Harold too, shall
tell

What Jutta knows of charm or
spell.'

Thus muttering, to the door she
bent 290

Her wayward steps and forth she
went,

And left alone the moody sire
To cherish or to slake his ire.

XVI

Far faster than belonged to age
Has Jutta made her pilgrimage.
A priest has met her as she passed,
And crossed himself and stood
aghast :

She traced a hamlet — not a cur
His throat would ope, his foot
would stir ;

By crouch, by trembling, and by
groan, 300

They made her hated presence
known !

But when she trode the sable fell,
Were wilder sounds her way to
tell, —

For far was heard the fox's yell,
The black-cock waked and faintly
crew,

Screamed o'er the moss the scared
curlew ;

Where o'er the cataract the oak
Lay slant, was heard the raven's
croak ;

The mountain-cat which sought
his prey

Glared, screamed, and started from
her way. 310

Such music cheered her journey
lone

To the deep dell and rocking
stone :

There with unhallowed hymn of
praise

She called a god of heathen days.

XVII

INVOCATION

' From thy Pomeranian throne,
Hewn in rock of living stone,
Where, to thy godhead faithful
yet,

Bend Esthonian, Finn, and Lett,
And their swords in vengeance
whet, 319

That shall make thine altars wet,
Wet and red for ages more
With the Christian's hated gore, —
Hear me, Sovereign of the Rock !
Hear me, mighty Zerneck !

' Mightiest of the mighty known,
Here thy wonders have been
shown ;

Hundred tribes in various tongue
Oft have here thy praises sung ;
Down that stone with Runic
seamed

Hundred victims' blood hath
streamed ! 330

Now one woman comes alone
And but wets it with her own,
The last, the feeblest of thy flock, —
Hear — and be present, Zerneck !

' Hark ! he comes ! the night-blast
cold

Wilder sweeps along the wold ;
The cloudless moon grows dark
and dim,

And bristling hair and quaking
limb

Proclaim the Master Demon
nigh, —

Those who view his form shall
die ! 340

Lo ! I stoop and veil my head ;
Thou who ridest the tempest dread.

Shaking hill and rending oak —
Spare me! spare me, Zerneck!

'He comes not yet! Shall cold
delay

Thy votaress at her need repay?
Thou—shall I call thee god or
fiend?—

Let others on thy mood attend
With prayer and ritual—Jutta's
arms

Are necromantic words and
charms; 350

Mine is the spell that uttered once
Shall wake thy Master from his
trance,

Shake his red mansion-house of
pain

And burst his seven-times-twisted
chain!—

So! com'st thou ere the spell is
spoke?

I own thy presence, Zerneck.'—

XVIII

'Daughter of dust,' the Deep Voice
said—

Shook while it spoke the vale for
dread,

Rocked on the base that massive
stone,

The evil Deity to own,— 360

'Daughter of dust! not mine the
power

Thou seek'st on Harold's fatal
hour.

'Twixt heaven and hell there is a
strife

Waged for his soul and for his life,
And fain would we the combat
win

And snatch him in his hour of sin.
There is a star now rising red
That threatens him with an influence
dread:

Woman, thine arts of malice whet,
To use the space before it set. 370
Involve him with the church in
strife,

Push on adventurous chance his
life;

Ourself will in the hour of need,
As best we may, thy counsels
speed.'

So ceased the Voice; for seven
leagues round

Each hamlet started at the sound,
But slept again as slowly died
Its thunders on the hill's brown
side.

XIX

'And is this all,' said Jutta stern,
'That thou canst teach and I can
learn? 380

Hence! to the land of fog and
waste,

There fittest is thine influence
placed,

Thou powerless, sluggish Deity!
But ne'er shall Briton bend the
knee

Again before so poor a god.'
She struck the altar with her rod;
Slight was the touch as when at
need

A damsel stirs her tardy steed;
But to the blow the stone gave
place,

And, starting from its balanced
base, 390

Rolled thundering down the moon-
light dell,—

Reëchoed moorland, rock, and fell;
Into the moonlight tarn it dashed,
Their shores the sounding surges
lashed,

And there was ripple, rage, and
foam;

But on that lake, so dark and lone,
Placid and pale the moonbeam
shone

As Jutta hied her home.

CANTO THIRD

I

GRAY towers of Durham! there
was once a time

I viewed your battlements with
such vague hope

As brightens life in its first
 dawning prime;
 Not that e'en then came within
 fancy's scope
 A vision vain of mitre, throne, or
 cope;
 Yet, gazing on the venerable hall,
 Her flattering dreams would in
 perspective ope
 Some reverend room, some pre-
 bendary's stall, —
 And thus Hope me deceived as she
 deceiveth all.

Well yet I love thy mixed and
 massive piles, ¹⁰
 Half church of God, half castle
 'gainst the Scot,
 And long to roam these vener-
 able aisles,
 With records stored of deeds
 long since forgot;
 There might I share my Surtees'
 happier lot,
 Who leaves at will his patrimo-
 nial field
 To ransack every crypt and hal-
 lowed spot,
 And from oblivion rend the
 spoils they yield,
 Restoring priestly chant and clang
 of knightly shield.

Vain is the wish—since other
 cares demand
 Each vacant hour, and in another
 clime; ²⁰
 But still that northern harp in-
 vites my hand
 Which tells the wonder of thine
 earlier time;
 And fain its numbers would I
 now command
 To paint the beauties of that
 dawning fair
 When Harold, gazing from its
 lofty stand
 Upon the western heights of
 Beaurepaire,
 Saw Saxon Eadmer's towers begirt
 by winding Wear,

II

Fair on the half-seen streams
 the sunbeams danced,
 Betraying it beneath the wood-
 land bank,
 And fair between the Gothic
 turrets glanced ³⁰
 Broad lights, and shadows fell
 on front and flank,
 Where tower and buttress rose
 in martial rank,
 And girdled in the massive don-
 jon keep,
 And from their circuit pealed
 o'er bush and bank
 The matin bell with summons
 long and deep,
 And echo answered still with long-
 resounding sweep.

III

The morning mists rose from the
 ground,
 Each merry bird awakened round
 As if in revelry;
 Afar the bugle's clanging sound ⁴⁰
 Called to the chase the lagging
 hound;
 The gale breathed soft and free,
 And seemed to linger on its way
 To catch fresh odors from the
 spray,
 And waved it in its wanton play
 So light and gamesomely.
 The scenes which morning beams
 reveal,
 Its sounds to hear, its gales to
 feel
 In all their fragrance round him
 steal, ⁴⁹
 It melted Harold's heart of steel,
 And, hardly wotting why,
 He doffed his helmet's gloomy
 pride
 And hung it on a tree beside,
 Laid mace and falchion by,
 And on the greensward sate him
 down
 And from his dark habitual frown
 Relaxed his rugged brow—
 Whoever hath the doubtful task

From that stern Dane a boon to
ask
Were wise to ask it now. 60

IV

His place beside young Gunnar
took
And marked his master's softening
look,
And in his eye's dark mirror spied
The gloom of stormy thoughts sub-
side,
And cautious watched the fittest
tide

To speak a warning word.
So when the torrent's billows
shrink,
The timid pilgrim on the brink
Waits long to see them wave and
sink

Ere he dare brave the ford, 70
And often after doubtful pause
His step advances or withdraws;
Fearful to move the slumbering ire
Of his stern lord, thus stood the
squire

Till Harold raised his eye,
That glanced as when athwart the
shroud

Of the dispersing tempest-cloud
The bursting sunbeams fly.

V

'Arouse thee, son of Ermengarde,
Offspring of prophetess and bard!
Take harp and greet this lovely
prime 81

With some high strain of Runic
rhyme,

Strong, deep, and powerful! Peal
it round

Like that loud bell's sonorous
sound,

Yet wild by fits, as when the lay
Of bird and bugle hail the day.
Such was my grandsire Eric's
sport

When dawn gleamed on his martial
court.

Heymar the Scald with harp's
high sound

Summoned the chiefs who slept
around; 90

Couched on the spoils of wolf and
bear,

They roused like lions from their
lair,

Then rushed in emulation forth
To enhance the glories of the
north. —

Proud Eric, mightiest of thy race,
Where is thy shadowy resting-
place?

In wild Valhalla hast thou quaffed
From foeman's skull metheglin
draught,

Or wanderest where thy cairn was
piled

To frown o'er oceans wide and
wild? 100

Or have the milder Christians
given

Thy refuge in their peaceful hea-
ven?

Where'er thou art, to thee are
known

Our toils endured, our trophies
won,

Our wars, our wanderings, and
our woes.'

He ceased, and Gunnar's song
arose.

VI

SONG

'Hawk and ospreys screamed for joy
O'er the beetling cliffs of Hoy,
Crimson foam the beach o'er-
spread,

The heath was dyed with darker
red, 110

When o'er Eric, Inguar's son,
Dane and Northman piled the
stone,

Singing wild the war-song stern,
"Rest thee, Dweller of the Cairn!"

'Where eddying currents foam
and boil

By Bersa's burgh and Græmsay's
isle,

The seaman sees a martial form
Half-mingled with the mist and
storm.

In anxious awe he bears away
To moor his bark in Stromna's
bay, 120

And murmurs from the bounding
stern,

"Rest thee, Dweller of the Cairn!"

'What cares disturb the mighty
dead?

Each honored rite was duly paid;
No daring hand thy helm unlaced,
Thy sword, thy shield, were near
thee placed;

Thy flinty couch no tear profaned:
Without, with hostile blood 't was
stained;

Within, 't was lined with moss and
fern,—

Then rest thee, Dweller of the
Cairn! 130

'He may not rest: from realms
afar

Comes voice of battle and of war,
Of conquest wrought with bloody
hand

On Carmel's cliffs and Jordan's
strand,

When Odin's warlike son could
daunt

The turbaned race of Terma-
gaunt.'

VII

'Peace,' said the knight, 'the
noble Scald

Our warlike fathers' deeds re-
called,

But never strove to soothe the
son

With tales of what himself had
done. 140

At Odin's board the bard sits high
Whose harp ne'er stooped to flat-
tery,

But highest he whose daring lay
Hath dared unwelcome truths to
say.'

With doubtful smile young Gun-
nar eyed

His master's looks and naught re-
plied—

But well that smile his master led
To construe what he left unsaid.

'Is it to me, thou timid youth,
Thou fear'st to speak unwelcome
truth! 150

My soul no more thy censure
grieves

Than frosts rob laurels of their
leaves.

Say on—and yet—beware the
rude

And wild distemper of my blood;
Loath were I that mine ire should
wrong

The youth that bore my shield so
long,

And who, in service constant still,
Though weak in frame, art strong
in will.'

'O!' quoth the page, 'even there
depends

My counsel—there my warning
tends — 160

Oft seems as of my master's
breast

Some demon were the sudden
guest;

Then at the first misconstrued word
His hand is on the mace and
sword,

From her firm seat his wisdom
driven,

His life to countless dangers given.
O, would that Gunnar could suffice

To be the fiend's last sacrifice,
So that, when glutted with my

gore,
He fled and tempted thee no

more! 170

VIII

Then waved his hand and shook
his head

The impatient Dane while thus he
said:

'Profane not, youth—it is not
thine

To judge the spirit of our line —
The bold Berserker's rage divine,
Through whose inspiring deeds
are wrought

Past human strength and human
thought.

When full upon his gloomy soul
The champion feels the influence
roll,

He swims the lake, he leaps the
wall — 180

Heeds not the depth, nor plumbs
the fall —

Unshielded, mailless, on he goes
Singly against a host of foes;
Their spears he holds like with-
ered reeds,

Their mail like maiden's silken
weeds;

One 'gainst a hundred will he
strive,

Take countless wounds and yet
survive.

Then rush the eagles to his cry
Of slaughter and of victory, —

And blood he quaffs like Odin's
bowl, 190

Deep drinks his sword, — deep
drinks his soul;

And all that meet him in his ire
He gives to ruin, rout, and fire;

Then, like gorged lion, seeks some
den

And couches till he's man agen. —
Thou know'st the signs of look
and limb

When 'gins that rage to over-
brim —

Thou know'st when I am moved
and why;

And when thou see'st me roll mine
eye,

Set my teeth thus, and stamp my
foot, 200

Regard thy safety and be mute;
But else speak boldly out what-
e'er

Is fitting that a knight should
hear.

I love thee, youth. The lay has
power

Upon my dark and sullen hour; —
So Christian monks are wont to
say

Demons of old were charmed
away;

Then fear not I will rashly deem
Ill of thy speech, whate'er the
theme.'

IX

As down some strait in doubt and
dread 210

The watchful pilot drops the lead,
And, cautious in the midst to
steer,

The shoaling channel sounds with
fear;

So, lest on dangerous ground he
swerved,

The page his master's brow ob-
served,

Pausing at intervals to fling
His hand on the melodious string,

And to his moody breast apply
The soothing charm of harmony,

While hinted half, and half ex-
prest, 220

This warning song conveyed the
rest. —

SONG

' Ill fares the bark with tackle
riven,

And ill when on the breakers
driven, —

Ill when the storm-sprite shrieks
in air,

And the scared mermaid tears her
hair;

But worse when on her helm the
hand

Of some false traitor holds com-
mand.

' Ill fares the fainting palmer,
placed

Mid Hedron's rocks or Rana's
waste, —

Ill when the scorching sun is
high, 230

And the expected font is dry, —
Worse when his guide o'er sand
and heath,
The barbarous Copt, has planned
his death.

'Ill fares the knight with buckler
cleft,
And ill when of his helm bereft, —
Ill when his steed to earth is flung,
Or from his grasp the falchion
wrung;
But worse, of instant ruin token,
When he lists rede by woman
spoken.' —

X

'How now, fond boy? — Canst
thou think ill,' 240
Said Harold, 'of fair Metelill?'
'She may be fair,' the page replied
As through the strings he
ranged, —
'She may be fair; but yet,' he cried,
And then the strain he
changed, —

SONG

'She may be fair,' he sang, 'but
yet
Far fairer have I seen
Than she, for all her locks of jet
And eyes so dark and sheen.
Were I a Danish knight in arms,
As one day I may be, 251
My heart should own no foreign
charms —
A Danish maid for me!

'I love my father's northern land,
Where the dark pine-trees grow,
And the bold Baltic's echoing
strand
Looks o'er each grassy oe.
I love to mark the lingering sun,
From Denmark loath to go,
And leaving on the billows bright,
To cheer the short-lived summer
night, 261
A path of ruddy glow.

'But most the northern maid I
love,
With breast like Denmark's
snow
And form as fair as Denmark's
pine,
Who loves with purple heath to
twine
Her locks of sunny glow;
And sweetly blend that shade of
gold
With the cheek's rosy hue,
And Faith might for her mirror
hold 270
That eye of matchless blue.

'T is hers the manly sports to love
That southern maidens fear,
To bend the bow by stream and
grove,
And lift the hunter's spear.
She can her chosen champion's
flight
With eye undazzled see,
Clasp him victorious from the
strife,
Or on his corpse yield up her life, —
A Danish maid for me!' 280

XI

Then smiled the Dane — 'Thou
canst so well
The virtues of our maidens tell,
Half could I wish my choice had
been
Blue eyes, and hair of golden sheen,
And lofty soul; — yet what of ill
Hast thou to charge on Metelill?'
'Nothing on her,' young Gunnar
said,
'But her base sire's ignoble trade.
Her mother too — the general
fame
Hath given to Jutta evil name, 290
And in her gray eye is a flame
Art cannot hide nor fear can
tame. —
That sordid woodman's peasant
cot
Twice have thine honored foot-
steps sought,

And twice returned with such ill
rede
As sent thee on some desperate
deed.'

XII

'Thou errest; Jutta wisely said,
He that comes suitor to a maid,
Ere linked in marriage, should
provide

Lands and a dwelling for his
bride — 300

My father's by the Tyne and Wear
I have reclaimed.'— 'O, all too
dear

And all too dangerous the prize,
E'en were it won,' young Gunnar
cries;—

'And then this Jutta's fresh de-
vice,

That thou shouldst seek, a heathen
Dane,

From Durham's priests a boon to
gain

When thou hast left their vassals
slain

In their own halls!'— Flashed
Harold's eye,

Thundered his voice— 'False
page, you lie! 310

The castle, hall and tower, is mine,
Built by old Witikind on Tyne.

The wild-cat will defend his den,
Fights for her nest the timid wren;

And think'st thou I'll forego my
right

For dread of monk or monkish
knight?—

Up and away, that deepening
bell

Doth of the bishop's conclave
tell.

Thither will I in manner due,
As Jutta bade, my claim to sue; 320

And if to right me they are loath,
Then woe to church and chapter
both!'

Now shift the scene and let the
curtain fall,

And our next entry be Saint Cuth-
bert's hall.

CANTO FOURTH

I

FULL many a bard hath sung
the solemn gloom

Of the long Gothic aisle and
stone-ribbed roof,

O'er-canopying shrine and gor-
geous tomb,

Carved screen, and altar glim-
mering far aloof

And blending with the shade—
a matchless proof

Of high devotion, which hath
now waxed cold;

Yet legends say that Luxury's
brute hoof

Intruded oft within such sacred
fold,

Like step of Bel's false priest
tracked in his fane of old.

Well pleased am I, howe'er, that
when the route 10

Of our rude neighbors whilome
deigned to come,

Uncalled and eke unwelcome, to
sweep out

And cleanse our chancel from
the rags of Rome,

They spoke not on our ancient
fane the doom

To which their bigot zeal gave
o'er their own,

But spared the martyred saint
and storied tomb,

Though papal miracles had
graced the stone,

And though the aisles still loved
the organ's swelling tone.

And deem not, though 't is now
my part to paint

A prelate swayed by love of
power and gold, 20

That all who wore the mitre of
our Saint

Like to ambitious Aldingar I
hold;

Since both in modern times and
days of old

It sate on those whose virtues
might atone
Their predecessors' frailties
trebly told:
Matthew and Morton we as
such may own —
And such — if fame speak truth —
the honored Barrington.

II

But now to earlier and to ruder
times,
As subject meet, I tune my rugged
rhymes,
Telling how fairly the chapter
was met, 30
And rood and books in seemly
order set;
Huge brass-clasped volumes which
the hand
Of studious priest but rarely
scanned,
Now on fair carved desk dis-
played,
'T was theirs the solemn scene to
aid.
O'erhead with many a scutcheon
graced
And quaint devices interlaced,
A labyrinth of crossing rows,
The roof in lessening arches
shows;
Beneath its shade placed proud
and high 40
With footstool and with canopy,
Sate Aldingar — and prelate ne'er
More haughty graced Saint Cuth-
bert's chair;
Canons and deacons were placed
below,
In due degree and lengthened row.
Unmoved and silent each sat
there,
Like image in his oaken chair;
Nor head nor hand nor foot they
stirred,
Nor lock of hair nor tress of
beard;
And of their eyes severe alone 50
The twinkle showed they were
not stone.

III

The prelate was to speech ad-
dressed,
Each head sunk reverent on
each breast;
But ere his voice was heard —
without
Arose a wild tumultuous shout,
Offspring of wonder mixed with
fear,
Such as in crowded streets we
hear
Hailing the flames that, bursting
out,
Attract yet scare the rabble rout.
Ere it had ceased a giant hand 60
Shook oaken door and iron band
Till oak and iron both gave
way,
Clashed the long bolts, the
hinges bray,
And, ere upon angel or saint they
can call,
Stands Harold the Dauntless in
midst of the hall.

IV

'Now save ye, my masters, both
rocket and rood,
From Bishop with mitre to deacon
with hood!
For here stands Count Harold, old
Witikind's son,
Come to sue for the lands which
his ancestors won.'
The prelate looked round him with
sore troubled eye, 70
Unwilling to grant yet afraid to
deny;
While each canon and deacon who
heard the Dane speak,
To be safely at home would have
fasted a week: —
Then Aldingar roused him and
answered again,
'Thou suest for a boon which thou
canst not obtain;
The Church hath no fiefs for an
unchristened Dane.
Thy father was wise, and his trea-
sure hath given

That the priests of a chantry might
 hymn him to heaven;
 And the fiefs which whilome he
 possessed as his due
 Have lapsed to the Church, and
 been granted anew 80
 To Anthony Conyers and Alberic
 Vere,
 For the service Saint Cuthbert's
 blest banner to bear
 When the bands of the North come
 to foray the Wear;
 Then disturb not our conclave with
 wrangling or blame,
 But in peace and in patience pass
 hence as ye came.'

V

Loud laughed the stern Pagan,
 'They're free from the care
 Of fief and of service, both Con-
 yers and Vere,—
 Six feet of your chancel is all they
 will need,
 A buckler of stone and a corselet
 of lead.—
 Ho, Gunnar!—the tokens!'—and,
 severed anew, 90
 A head and a hand on the altar he
 threw.
 Then shuddered with terror both
 canon and monk,
 They knew the glazed eye and the
 countenance shrunk,
 And of Anthony Conyers the half-
 grizzled hair,
 And the scar on the hand of Sir
 Alberic Vere.
 There was not a churchman or
 priest that was there
 But grew pale at the sight and be-
 took him to prayer.

VI

Count Harold laughed at their
 looks of fear:
 'Was this the hand should your
 banner bear?
 Was that the head should wear
 the casque 100
 In battle at the Church's task?

Was it to such you gave the place
 Of Harold with the heavy mace?
 Find me between the Wear and
 Tyne
 A knight will wield this club of
 mine,—
 Give him my fiefs, and I will say
 There's wit beneath the cowl of
 gray.'
 He raised it, rough with many a
 stain
 Caught from crushed skull and
 spouting brain; 109
 He wheeled it that it shrilly sung
 And the aisles echoed as it swung,
 Then dashed it down with sheer
 descent
 And split King Osric's monu-
 ment.—
 'How like ye this music? How
 trow ye the hand
 That can wield such a mace may
 be reft of its land?
 No answer?—I spare ye a space
 to agree,
 And Saint Cuthbert inspire you, a
 saint if he be.
 Ten strides through your chancel,
 ten strokes on your bell,
 And again I am with you—grave
 fathers, farewell.'

VII

He turned from their presence, he
 clashed the oak door, 120
 And the clang of his stride died
 away on the floor;
 And his head from his bosom the
 prelate uprears
 With a ghost-seer's look when the
 ghost disappears:
 'Ye Priests of Saint Cuthbert, now
 give me your rede,
 For never of counsel had bishop
 more need!
 Were the arch-fiend incarnate in
 flesh and in bone,
 The language, the look, and the
 laugh were his own.
 In the bounds of Saint Cuthbert
 there is not a knight

Dare confront in our quarrel yon
goblin in fight;
Then rede me aright to his claim
to reply, 130
'T is unlawful to grant and 'tis
death to deny.'

VIII

On venison and malmsie that morn-
ing had fed
The Cellarer Vinsauf—'t was thus
that he said:
'Delay till to-morrow the Chapter's
reply;
Let the feast be spread fair and
the wine be poured high:
If he's mortal he drinks,—if he
drinks, he is ours—
His bracelets of iron,—his bed
in our towers.'
This man had a laughing eye,
Trust not, friends, when such you
spy;
A beaker's depth he well could
drain, 140
Revel, sport, and jest amain—
The haunch of the deer and the
grape's bright dye
Never bard loved them better
than I;
But sooner than Vinsauf filled me
my wine,
Passed me his jest, and laughed at
mine,
Though the buck were of Bear-
park, of Bourdeaux the vine,
With the dullest hermit I'd rather
dine
On an oaken cake and a draught
of the Tyne.

IX

Walwayn the leech spoke next—
he knew
Each plant that loves the sun and
dew, 150
But special those whose juice can
gain
Dominion o'er the blood and brain;
The peasant who saw him by pale
moonbeam

Gathering such herbs by bank and
stream
Deemed his thin form and sound-
less tread
Were those of wanderer from the
dead.—
'Vinsauf, thy wine,' he said, 'hath
power,
Our gyves are heavy, strong our
tower;
Yet three drops from this flask of
mine,
More strong than dungeons, gyves,
or wine, 160
Shall give him prison under ground
More dark, more narrow, more pro-
found.
Short rede, good rede, let Harold
have—
A dog's death and a heathen's
grave.'
I have lain on a sick man's bed,
Watching for hours for the leech's
tread,
As if I deemed that his presence
alone
Were of power to bid my pain be-
gone;
I have listed his words of comfort
given,
As if to oracles from heaven; 170
I have counted his steps from my
chamber door,
And blessed them when they were
heard no more;—
But sooner than Walwayn my sick
couch should nigh,
My choice were by leech-craft un-
aided to die.

X

'Such service done in fervent zeal
The Church may pardon and con-
ceal,'
The doubtful prelate said, 'but
ne'er
The counsel ere the act should
hear.—
Anselm of Jarrow, advise us now,
The stamp of wisdom is on thy
brow; 180

Thy days, thy nights, in cloister
pent,
Are still to mystic learning lent;—
Anselm of Jarrow, in thee is my
hope,
Thou well mayst give counsel to
prelate or pope.'

XI

Answered the prior — "'Tis wis-
dom's use
Still to delay what we dare not re-
fuse;
Ere granting the boon he comes
hither to ask,
Shape for the giant gigantic task;
Let us see how a step so sounding
can tread
In paths of darkness, danger, and
dread; 190
He may not, he will not, impugn
our decree
That calls but for proof of his
chivalry;
And were Guy to return or Sir
Bevis the Strong,
Our wilds have adventure might
cumber them long —
The Castle of Seven Shields'—
'Kind Anselm, no more!
The step of the Pagan approaches
the door.'
The churchmen were hushed. — In
his mantle of skin
With his mace on his shoulder
Count Harold strode in,
There was foam on his lips, there
was fire in his eye,
For, chafed by attendance, his fury
was nigh. 200
'Ho! Bishop,' he said, 'dost thou
grant me my claim?
Or must I assert it by falchion and
flame?'

XII

'On thy suit, gallant Harold,' the
bishop replied,
In accents which trembled, 'we
may not decide

Until proof of your strength and
your valor we saw —
'Tis not that we doubt them, but
such is the law.' —
'And would you, Sir Prelate, have
Harold make sport
For the cowl and the shavelings
that herd in thy court?
Say what shall he do? — From the
shrine shall he tear
The lead bier of thy patron and
heave it in air. 210
And through the long chancel
make Cuthbert take wing
With the speed of a bullet dis-
missed from the sling?' —
'Nay, spare such probation,' the
cellarer said,
'From the mouth of our minstrels
thy task shall be read.
While the wine sparkles high in
the goblet of gold
And the revel is loudest, thy task
shall be told;
And thyself, gallant Harold, shall,
hearing it, tell
That the bishop, his cowl, and his
shavelings, meant well.'

XIII

Loud revelled the guests and the
goblets loud rang,
But louder the minstrel, Hugh
Meneville, sang; 220
And Harold, the hurry and pride
of whose soul,
E'en when verging to fury, owned
music's control,
Still bent on the harper his broad
sable eye,
And often untasted the goblet
passed by;
Than wine or than wassail to him
was more dear
The minstrel's high tale of en-
chantment to hear;
And the bishop that day might of
Vinsauf complain
That his art had but wasted his
wine-casks in vain.

XIV

THE CASTLE OF THE SEVEN
SHIELDS

A BALLAD

The Druid Urien had daughters
seven,

Their skill could call the moon
from heaven; ²³⁰

So fair their forms and so high
their fame

That seven proud kings for their
suitors came.

King Mador and Rhys came from
Powis and Wales,

Unshorn was their hair and un-
pruned were their nails;

From Strath-Clyde was Ewain,
and Ewain was lame,

And the red-bearded Donald from
Galloway came.

Lot, King of Lodon, was hunch-
backed from youth;

Dunmail of Cumbria had never a
tooth;

But Adolf of Bambrough, North-
umberland's heir,

Was gay and was gallant, was
young and was fair. ²⁴⁰

There was strife 'mongst the sis-
ters, for each one would have

For husband King Adolf, the gal-
lant and brave;

And envy bred hate, and hate
urged them to blows,

When the firm earth was cleft and
the Arch-fiend arose!

He swore to the maidens their
wish to fulfil—

They swore to the foe they would
work by his will.

A spindle and distaff to each hath
he given,

'Now hearken my spell,' said the
Outcast of heaven.

'Ye shall ply these spindles at
midnight hour,

And for every spindle shall rise a
tower, ²⁵⁰

Where the right shall be feeble,
the wrong shall have power,

And there shall ye dwell with your
paramour.'

Beneath the pale moonlight they
sate on the wold,

And the rhymes which they chant-
ed must never be told;

And as the black wool from the
distaff they sped,

With blood from their bosom they
moistened the thread.

As light danced the spindles be-
neath the cold gleam,

The castle arose like the birth of
a dream—

The seven towers ascended like
mist from the ground,

Seven portals defend them, seven
ditches surround. ²⁶⁰

Within that dread castle seven
monarchs were wed,

But six of the seven ere the morn-
ing lay dead;

With their eyes all on fire and their
daggers all red,

Seven damsels surround the
Northumbrian's bed.

'Six kingly bridegrooms to death
we have done,

Six gallant kingdoms King Adolf
hath won,

Six lovely brides all his pleasure
to do,

Or the bed of the seventh shall be
husbandless too.'

Well chanced it that Adolf the
night when he wed

Had confessed and had sained him
ere boune to his bed; ²⁷⁰

He sprung from the couch and his
broadsword he drew,
And there the seven daughters of
Urien he slew.

The gate of the castle he bolted
and sealed,
And hung o'er each arch-stone a
crown and a shield;
To the cells of Saint Dunstan then
wended his way,
And died in his cloister an ancho-
rite gray.

Seven monarchs' wealth in that
castle lies stowed,
The foul fiends brood o'er them
like raven and toad.
Whoever shall guesten these
chambers within,
From curfew till matins, that trea-
sure shall win. 280

But manhood grows faint as the
world waxes old!
There lives not in Britain a cham-
pion so bold,
So dauntless of heart, and so pru-
dent of brain,
As to dare the adventure that trea-
sure to gain.

The waste ridge of Cheviot shall
wave with the rye,
Before the rude Scots shall North-
umberland fly,
And the flint cliffs of Bambro'
shall melt in the sun,
Before that adventure be perilled
and won.

XV

'And is this my probation?' wild
Harold he said,
'Within a lone castle to press a
lone bed? — 290
Good even, my lord bishop, —
Saint Cuthbert to borrow,
The Castle of Seven Shields re-
ceives me to-morrow.'

CANTO FIFTH

I

DENMARK'S sage courtier to her
princely youth,
Granting his cloud an ousel or a
whale,
Spoke, though unwittingly, a par-
tial truth;
For Fantasy embroiders Na-
ture's veil.
The tints of ruddy eve or dawn-
ing pale,
Of the swart thunder-cloud or
silver haze,
Are but the ground-work of the
rich detail
Which Fantasy with pencil wild
portrays,
Blending what seems and is in the
rapt muser's gaze.

Nor are the stubborn forms of
earth and stone 10
Less to the Sorceress's empire
given;
For not with unsubstantial hues
alone,
Caught from the varying surge
of vacant heaven,
From bursting sunbeam or from
flashing levin,
She limns her pictures: on the
earth, as air,
Arise her castles and her car is
driven;
And never gazed the eye on
scene so fair,
But of its boasted charms gave
Fancy half the share.

II

Up a wild pass went Harold,
bent to prove,
Hugh Meneville, the adventure
of thy lay; 20
Gunnar pursued his steps in
faith and love,
Ever companion of his master's
way.
Midward their path, a rock of
granite gray

From the adjoining cliff had
made descent,—
A barren mass—yet with her
drooping spray
Had a young birch-tree crowned
its battlement,
Twisting her fibrous roots through
cranny, flaw, and rent.

This rock and tree could Gunnar's
thought engage
Till Fancy brought the tear-drop
to his eye,
And at his master asked the
timid page, ³⁰
'What is the emblem that a bard
should spy
In that rude rock and its green
canopy?'
And Harold said, 'Like to the
helmet brave
Of warrior slain in fight it seems
to lie,
And these same drooping boughs
do o'er it wave
Not all unlike the plume his lady's
favor gave.'

'Ah, no!' replied the page; 'the
ill-starred love
Of some poor maid is in the em-
blem shown,
Whose fates are with some hero's
interwove
And rooted on a heart to love
unknown: ⁴⁰
And as the gentle dews of hea-
ven alone
Nourish those drooping boughs,
and as the scathe
Of the red lightning rends both
tree and stone,
So fares it with her unrequited
faith,—
Her sole relief is tears—her only
refuge death.'

III

'Thou art a fond fantastic boy,'
Harold replied, 'to females coy,
Yet prating still of love; ⁴⁸
Even so amid the clash of war

I know thou lov'st to keep afar,
Though destined by thy evil star
With one like me to rove,
Whose business and whose joys
are found
Upon the bloody battle-ground.
Yet, foolish trembler as thou art,
Thou hast a nook of my rude
heart,
And thou and I will never part;
Harold would wrap the world in
flame
Ere injury on Gunnar came.' ⁵⁹

IV

The grateful page made no reply,
But turned to heaven his gentle
eye,
And clasped his hands, as one
who said,
'My toils—my wanderings are
o'erpaid!'
Then in a gayer, lighter strain,
Compelled himself to speech
again;
And, as they flowed along,
His words took cadence soft and
slow,
And liquid, like dissolving snow,
They melted into song.

V

'What though through fields of
carnage wide ⁷⁰
I may not follow Harold's stride,
Yet who with faithful Gunnar's
pride
Lord Harold's feats can see?
And dearer than the couch of
pride
He loves the bed of gray wolf's
hide,
When slumbering by Lord Har-
old's side
In forest, field, or lea.'

VI

'Break off!' said Harold, in a
tone
Where hurry and surprise were
shown, ⁷⁹

With some slight touch of
fear,
'Break off, we are not here
alone;
A palmer form comes slowly
on!
By cowl and staff and mantle
known,
My monitor is near.
Now mark him, Gunnar, heed-
fully;
He pauses by the blighted tree —
Dost see him, youth? — Thou
couldst not see
When in the vale of Galilee
I first beheld his form,
Nor when we met that other
while 90
In Cephalonia's rocky isle
Before the fearful storm, —
Dost see him now? — The page,
distraught
With terror, answered, 'I see
naught,
And there is naught to see,
Save that the oak's scathed
boughs fling down
Upon the path a shadow brown
That, like a pilgrim's dusky
gown,
Waves with the waving tree.'

VII

Count Harold gazed upon the
oak 100
As if his eyestrings would have
broke,
And then resolvedly said,
'Be what it will yon phantom
gray —
Nor heaven nor hell shall ever
say
That for their shadows from his
way
Count Harold turned dis-
mayed:
I'll speak him, though his ac-
cents fill
My heart with that unwonted
thrill

Which vulgar minds call fear.
I will subdue it!' Forth he
strode, 110
Paused where the blighted oak-
tree showed
Its sable shadow on the road,
And, folding on his bosom broad
His arms, said, 'Speak — I
hear.'

VIII

The Deep Voice said, 'O wild of
will,
Furious thy purpose to fulfil —
Heart-seared and unrepentant
still,
How long, O Harold, shall thy
tread
Disturb the slumbers of the
dead?
Each step in thy wild way thou
makest, 120
The ashes of the dead thou
wakest;
And shout in triumph o'er thy
path
The fiends of bloodshed and of
wrath.
In this thine hour, yet turn and
hear!
For life is brief and judgment
near.'

IX

Then ceased the Voice. — The
Dane replied
In tones where awe and inborn
pride
For mastery strove, 'In vain ye
chide
The wolf for ravaging the flock,
Or with its hardness taunt the
rock, — 130
I am as they — my Danish strain
Sends streams of fire through
every vein.
Amid thy realms of goule and
ghost,
Say, is the fame of Eric lost,
Or Witikind's the Waster, known

Where fame or spoil was to be won;

Whose galleys ne'er bore off a shore

They left not black with flame?—

He was my sire,—and, sprung of him,

That rover merciless and grim,
Can I be soft and tame?

Part hence and with my crimes no more upbraid me,

I am that Waster's son and am but what he made me.'

X

The Phantom groaned;—the mountain shook around,

The fawn and wild-doe started at the sound,

The gorse and fern did wildly round them wave,

As if some sudden storm the impulse gave.

'All thou hast said is truth—yet on the head

Of that bad sire let not the charge be laid

That he, like thee, with unrelenting pace

From grave to cradle ran the evil race:—

Relentless in his avarice and ire, Churches and towns he gave to

sword and fire;
Shed blood like water, wasted every land,

Like the destroying angel's burning brand;

Fulfilled whate'er of ill might be invented,

Yes—all these things he did—he did, but he REPENTED!

Perchance it is part of his punishment still

That his offspring pursues his example of ill.

But thou, when thy tempest of wrath shall next shake thee,

Gird thy loins for resistance, my son, and awake thee;

If thou yield'st to thy fury, how tempted soever,

The gate of repentance shall open for thee NEVER!'

XI

'He is gone,' said Lord Harold and gazed as he spoke;

'There is naught on the path but the shade of the oak.

He is gone whose strange presence my feeling oppressed,

Like the night-hag that sits on the slumberer's breast.

My heart beats as thick as a fugitive's tread,

And cold dew drops from my brow and my head.—

Ho! Gunnar, the flasket yon almoner gave;

He said that three drops would recall from the grave.

For the first time Count Harold owns leech-craft has power,

Or, his courage to aid, lacks the juice of a flower!'

The page gave the flasket, which Walwayn had filled

With the juice of wild roots that his heart had distilled—

So baneful their influence on all that had breath,

One drop had been frenzy and two had been death.

Harold took it, but drank not; for jubilee shrill

And music and clamor were heard on the hill,

And down the steep pathway o'er stock and o'er stone

The train of a bridal came blithely on;

There was song, there was pipe, there was timbrel, and still

The burden was, 'Joy to the fair Metelill!'

XII

Harold might see from his high stance,

Himself unseen, that train advance

With mirth and melody;—
 On horse and foot a mingled
 throng,
 Measuring their steps to bridal
 song
 And bridal minstrelsy;
 And ever when the blithesome
 rout 190
 Lent to the song their choral
 shout,
 Redoubling echoes rolled about,
 While echoing cave and cliff sent
 out
 The answering symphony
 Of all those mimic notes which
 dwell
 In hollow rock and sounding dell.

XIII

Joy shook his torch above the
 band,
 By many a various passion
 fanned;—
 As elemental sparks can feed
 On essence pure and coarsest
 weed, 200
 Gentle or stormy or refined,
 Joy takes the colors of the mind.
 Lightsome and pure but unre-
 pressed,
 He fired the bridegroom's gallant
 breast;
 More feebly strove with maiden
 fear,
 Yet still joy glimmered through
 the tear
 On the bride's blushing cheek that
 shows
 Like dewdrop on the budding
 rose;
 While Wulfstane's gloomy smile
 declared
 The glee that selfish avarice
 shared, 210
 And pleased revenge and malice
 high
 Joy's semblance took in Jutta's
 eye.
 On dangerous adventure sped,
 The witch deemed Harold with
 the dead,

For thus that morn her demon
 said:—

'If, ere the set of sun, be tied
 The knot 'twixt bridegroom and
 his bride,
 The Dane shall have no power of
 ill
 O'er William and o'er Metelill.'
 And the pleased witch made an-
 swer, 'Then 220
 Must Harold have passed from
 the paths of men!
 Evil repose may his spirit have,—
 May hemlock and mandrake find
 root in his grave,—
 May his death-sleep be dogged by
 dreams of dismay,
 And his waking be worse at the
 answering day!'

XIV

Such was their various mood of
 glee
 Blent in one shout of ecstasy.
 But still when Joy is brimming
 highest,
 Of sorrow and misfortune nighest,
 Of Terror with her ague cheek, 230
 And lurking Danger, sages
 speak:—
 These haunt each path, but chief
 they lay
 Their snares beside the primrose
 way.—
 Thus found that bridal band their
 path
 Beset by Harold in his wrath.
 Trembling beneath his maddening
 mood,
 High on a rock the giant stood;
 His shout was like the doom of
 death
 Spoke o'er their heads that passed
 beneath.
 His destined victims might not
 spy 240
 The reddening terrors of his eye,
 The frowning of rage that writhed
 his face,
 The lip that foamed like boar's in
 chase;

But all could see — and, seeing, all
Bore back to shun the threatened
fall —

The fragment which their giant foe
Rent from the cliff and heaved to
throw.

XV

Backward they bore — yet are
there two

For battle who prepare:
No pause of dread Lord William
knew 250

Ere his good blade was bare;
And Wulfstane bent his fatal yew,
But ere the silken cord he drew,
As hurled from Hecla's thunder
flew

That ruin through the air!
Full on the outlaw's front it came,
And all that late had human name,
And human face, and human
frame,

That lived and moved and had free
will

To choose the path of good or ill,
Is to its reckoning gone; 261
And naught of Wulfstane rests be-
hind

Save that beneath that stone,
Half-buried in the dinted clay,
A red and shapeless mass there lay
Of mingled flesh and bone!

XVI

As from the bosom of the sky
The eagle darts amain,
Three bounds from yonder sum-
mit high

Placed Harold on the plain. 270
As the scared wild-fowl scream
and fly,

So fled the bridal train;
As 'gainst the eagle's peerless
might

The noble falcon dares the fight,
But dares the fight in vain,
So fought the bridegroom; from
his hand

The Dane's rude mace has struck
his brand,

Its glittering fragments strew the
sand,

Its lord lies on the plain.
Now, Heaven! take noble Wil-
liam's part, 280
And melt that yet unmelted heart,
Or, ere his bridal hour depart,
The hapless bridegroom's slain!

XVII

Count Harold's frenzied rage is
high,

There is a death-fire in his eye,
Deep furrows on his brow are
trenched,

His teeth are set, his hand is
clenched,

The foam upon his lip is white,
His deadly arm is up to smite!
But, as the mace aloft he swung,
To stop the blow young Gunnar
sprung, 291

Around his master's knees he
clung,

And cried, 'In mercy spare!
O, think upon the words of fear
Spoke by that visionary Seer,
The crisis he foretold is here, —
Grant mercy, — or despair!'

This word suspended Harold's
mood,

Yet still with arm upraised he
stood,

And visage like the headsman's
rude 300

That pauses for the sign.
'O mark thee with the blessed
rood,'

The page implored. 'Speak word
of good,

Resist the fiend or be subdued!'
He signed the cross divine —

Instant his eye hath human
light,

Less red, less keen, less fiercely
bright;

His brow relaxed the obdurate
frown,

The fatal mace sinks gently down,
He turns and strides away; 310
Yet oft, like revellers who leave

Unfinished feast, looks back to
grieve,
As if repenting the reprieve
He granted to his prey.
Yet still of forbearance one sign
hath he given,
And fierce Witikind's son made
one step towards heaven.

XVIII

But though his dreaded footsteps
part,
Death is behind and shakes his
dart;

Lord William on the plain is lying,
Beside him Metelill seems dy-
ing! — 320

Bring odors — essences in haste —
And lo! a flasket richly chased, —
But Jutta the elixir proves
Ere pouring it for those she
loves —

Then Walwayn's potion was not
wasted,
For when three drops the hag had
tasted

So dismal was her yell,
Each bird of evil omen woke,
The raven gave his fatal croak,
And shrieked the night-crow from
the oak, 330

The screech-owl from the thicket
broke,

And fluttered down the dell!
So fearful was the sound and stern,
The slumbers of the full-gorged
erne

Were startled, and from furze and
fern

Of forest and of fell
The fox and famished wolf re-
plied —

For wolves then prowled the Che-
viot side —

From mountain head to mountain
head

The unhallowed sounds around
were sped; 340

But when their latest echo fled
The sorceress on the ground lay
dead.

XIX

Such was the scene of blood and
woes

With which the bridal morn arose
Of William and of Metelill;

But oft, when dawning 'gins to
spread,

The summer morn peeps dim and
red

Above the eastern hill,
Ere, bright and fair, upon his road
The king of splendor walks
abroad; 350

So, when this cloud had passed
away,

Bright was the noontide of their day
And all serene its setting ray.

CANTO SIXTH

I

WELL do I hope that this my
minstrel tale

Will tempt no traveller from
southern fields,

Whether in tilbury, barouche, or
mail,

To view the Castle of these
Seven Proud Shields.

Small confirmation its condition
yields

To Meneville's high lay, — no
towers are seen

On the wild heath but those that
Fancy builds,

And, save a fosse that tracks the
moor with green,

Is naught remains to tell of what
may there have been.

And yet grave authors, with the
no small waste 10

Of their grave time, have digni-
fied the spot

By theories, to prove the fortress
placed

By Roman bands to curb the in-
vading Scot.

Hutchinson, Horseley, Camden,
I might quote,

But rather choose the theory
 less civil
 Of boors, who, origin of things
 forgot,
 Refer still to the origin of evil,
 And for their master-mason choose
 that master-fiend the Devil.

II

Therefore, I say, it was on fiend-
 built towers
 That stout Count Harold bent
 his wondering gaze ²⁰
 When evening dew was on the
 heather flowers,
 And the last sunbeams made the
 mountain blaze
 And tinged the battlements of
 other days
 With the bright level light ere
 sinking down.
 Illumined thus, the dauntless
 Dane surveys
 The Seven Proud Shields that
 o'er the portal frown,
 And on their blazons traced high
 marks of old renown.

A wolf North Wales had on his
 armor-coat,
 And Rhys of Powis-land a couch-
 ant stag;
 Strath-Clwyd's strange emblem
 was a stranded boat, ³⁰
 Donald of Galloway's a trotting
 nag;
 A corn-sheaf gilt was fertile
 Lodon's brag;
 A dudgeon-dagger was by Dun-
 mail worn;
 Northumbrian Adolf gave a sea-
 beat crag
 Surmounted by a cross—such
 signs were borne
 Upon these antique shields, all
 wasted now and worn.

III

These scanned, Count Harold
 sought the castle-door,
 Whose ponderous bolts were
 rusted to decay;

Yet till that hour adventurous
 knight forbore
 The unobstructed passage to
 essay. ⁴⁰
 More strong than armed ward-
 ers in array,
 And obstacle more sure than
 bolt or bar,
 Sate in the portal Terror and
 Dismay,
 While Superstition, who forbade
 to war
 With foes of other mould than
 mortal clay,
 Cast spells across the gate and
 barred the onward way.

Vain now those spells; for soon
 with heavy clank
 The feebly-fastened gate was in-
 ward pushed,
 And, as it oped, through that
 emblazoned rank
 Of antique shields the wind of
 evening rushed ⁵⁰
 With sound most like a groan
 and then was hushed.
 Is none who on such spot such
 sounds could hear
 But to his heart the blood had
 faster rushed;
 Yet to bold Harold's breast that
 throb was dear—
 It spoke of danger nigh, but had
 no touch of fear.

IV

Yet Harold and his page no
 signs have traced
 Within the castle that of danger
 showed;
 For still the halls and courts
 were wild and waste,
 As through their precincts the
 adventurers trode.
 The seven huge towers rose
 stately, tall, and broad, ⁶⁰
 Each tower presenting to their
 scrutiny
 A hall in which a king might
 make abode,

And fast beside, garnished both
proud and high,
Was placed a bower for rest in
which a king might lie.

As if a bridal there of late had
been,
Decked stood the table in each
gorgeous hall;
And yet it was two hundred
years, I ween,
Since date of that unhallowed
festival.
Flagons and ewers and standing
cups were all
Of tarnished gold or silver no-
thing clear,
With throne begilt and canopy
of pall,
And tapestry clothed the walls
with fragments sear —
Frail as the spider's mesh did that
rich woof appear.

V

In every bower, as round a
hearse, was hung
A dusky crimson curtain o'er
the bed,
And on each couch in ghastly
wise were flung
The wasted relics of a monarch
dead;
Barbaric ornaments around were
spread,
Vests twined with gold and
chains of precious stone,
And golden circlets, meet for
monarch's head;
While grinned, as if in scorn
amongst them thrown,
The wearer's fleshless skull, alike
with dust bestrewn.

For these were they who,
drunken with delight,
On pleasure's opiate pillow laid
their head,
For whom the bride's shy foot-
step, slow and light,

Was changed ere morning to the
murderer's tread.
For human bliss and woe in the
frail thread
Of human life are all so closely
twined
That till the shears of Fate the
texture shred
The close succession cannot be
disjoined,
Nor dare we from one hour judge
that which comes behind.

VI

But where the work of ven-
geance had been done,
In that seventh chamber, was a
sterner sight,
There of the witch-brides lay
each skeleton,
Still in the posture as to death
when dight.
For this lay prone, by one blow
slain outright;
And that, as one who struggled
long in dying;
One bony hand held knife, as if
to smite;
One bent on fleshless knees, as
mercy crying;
One lay across the door, as killed
in act of flying.

The stern Dane smiled this char-
nel-house to see, —
For his chafed thought returned
to Metelill: —
And 'Well,' he said, 'hath wo-
man's perfidy,
Empty as air, as water volatile,
Been here avenged. — The origin
of ill
Through woman rose, the Chris-
tian doctrine saith;
Nor deem I, Gunnar, that thy
minstrel skill
Can show example where a wo-
man's breath
Hath made a true-love vow, and
tempted kept her faith.'

VII

The minstrel-boy half smiled,
 half sighed, 110
 And his half-filling eyes he dried,
 And said, 'The theme I should
 but wrong,
 Unless it were my dying song—
 Our Scalds have said, in dying
 hour
 The Northern harp has treble
 power—
 Else could I tell of woman's
 faith,
 Defying danger, scorn, and death.
 Firm was that faith—as dia-
 mond stone
 Pure and unflawed—her love
 unknown 119
 And unrequited; firm and pure,
 Her stainless faith could all en-
 dure;
 From clime to clime, from place
 to place,
 Through want and danger and
 disgrace.
 A wanderer's wayward steps
 could trace.
 All this she did, and guerdon
 none
 Required save that her burial-
 stone
 Should make at length the secret
 known,
 "Thus hath a faithful woman
 done."—
 Not in each breast such truth is
 laid, 129
 .But Eivir was a Danish maid.'

VIII

'Thou art a wild enthusiast,'
 said
 Count Harold, 'for thy Danish
 maid;
 And yet, young Gunnar, I will
 own
 Hers were a faith to rest upon.
 But Eivir sleeps beneath her
 stone
 And all resembling her are gone.'

What maid e'er showed such
 constancy
 In plighted faith, like thine to
 me?
 But couch thee, boy; the dark-
 some shade
 Falls thickly round, nor be dis-
 mayed 140
 Because the dead are by.
 They were as we; our little
 day
 O'erspent, and we shall be as
 they.
 Yet near me, Gunnar, be thou
 laid,
 Thy couch upon my mantle
 made,
 That thou mayst think, should
 fear invade,
 Thy master slumbers nigh.'
 Thus couched they in that dread
 abode,
 Until the beams of dawning
 glowed.

IX

An altered man Lord Harold
 rose, 150
 When he beheld that dawn un-
 close—
 There's trouble in his eyes,
 And traces on his brow and
 cheek
 Of mingled awe and wonder
 speak:
 'My page,' he said, 'arise;—
 Leave we this place, my page.'
 —No more
 He uttered till the castle door
 They crossed—but there he
 paused and said,
 'My wildness hath awaked the
 dead—
 Disturbed the sacred tomb! 160
 Methought this night I stood on
 high
 Where Hecla roars in middle
 sky,
 And in her caverned gulfs could
 spy
 The central place of doom;

And there before my mortal
 eye
 Souls of the dead came flitting
 by,
 Whom fiends with many a fiend-
 ish cry
 Bore to that evil den!
 My eyes grew dizzy and my
 brain
 Was wildered, as the elvish
 train 170
 With shriek and howl dragged
 on amain
 Those who had late been men.

X

'With haggard eyes and stream-
 ing hair,
 Jutta the Sorceress was there,
 And there passed Wulfstane
 lately slain,
 All crushed and foul with bloody
 stain. —
 More had I seen, but that uprose
 A whirlwind wild and swept the
 snows;
 And with such sound as when
 at need
 A champion spurs his horse to
 speed, 180
 Three armed knights rush on
 who lead
 Caparisoned a sable steed.
 Sable their harness, and there
 came
 Through their closed visors
 sparks of flame.
 The first proclaimed, in sounds
 of fear,
 "Harold the Dauntless, welcome
 here!"
 The next cried, "Jubilee! we've
 won
 Count Witikind the Waster's
 son!"
 And the third rider sternly
 spoke,
 "Mount, in the name of Zer-
 ne- 190
 bock! —
 From us, O Harold, were thy
 powers, —

Thy strength, thy dauntlessness,
 are ours;
 Nor think, a vassal thou of hell,
 With hell can strive." The fiend
 spoke true!
 My inmost soul the summons
 knew,
 As captives know the knell
 That says the headsman's sword
 is bare
 And with an accent of despair
 Commands them quit their
 cell.
 I felt resistance was in vain, 200
 My foot had that fell stirrup
 ta'en,
 My hand was on the fatal mane,
 When to my rescue sped
 That palmer's visionary form,
 And — like the passing of a
 storm —
 The demons yelled and fled!

XI

'His sable cowl flung back re-
 vealed
 The features it before concealed;
 And, Gunnar, I could find
 In him whose counsels strove to
 stay 210
 So oft my course on wilful way
 My father Witikind!
 Doomed for his sins and doomed
 for mine
 A wanderer upon earth to pine
 Until his son shall turn to grace
 And smooth for him a resting-
 place. —
 Gunnar, he must not haunt in
 vain
 This world of wretchedness and
 pain:
 I'll tame my wilful heart to live
 In peace — to pity and forgive —
 And thou, for so the Vision
 said 221
 Must in thy lord's repentance
 aid.
 Thy mother was a prophetess,
 He said, who by her skill could
 guess

How close the fatal textures
 join
 Which knit thy thread of life
 with mine;
 Then dark he hinted of disguise
 She framed to cheat too curious
 eyes
 That not a moment might divide
 Thy fated footsteps from my
 side. 230
 Methought while thus my sire
 did teach
 I caught the meaning of his
 speech,
 Yet seems its purport doubtful
 now.
 His hand then sought his
 thoughtful brow —
 Then first he marked, that in the
 tower
 His glove was left at waking
 hour.

XII

Trembling at first and deadly
 pale,
 Had Gunnar heard the visioned
 tale;
 But when he learned the dubious
 close
 He blushed like any opening
 rose, 240
 And, glad to hide his tell-tale
 cheek,
 Hied back that glove of mail to
 seek;
 When soon a shriek of deadly
 dread
 Summoned his master to his aid.

XIII

What sees Count Harold in that
 bower
 So late his resting-place? —
 The semblance of the Evil
 Power,
 Adored by all his race!
 Odin in living form stood there,
 His cloak the spoils of Polar
 bear; 250
 For plummy crest a meteor shed

Its gloomy radiance o'er his
 head,
 Yet veiled its haggard majesty
 To the wild lightnings of his eye.
 Such height was his as when in
 stone
 O'er Upsal's giant altar shown:
 So flowed his hoary beard;
 Such was his lance of mountain-
 pine,
 So did his sevenfold buckler
 shine;
 But when his voice he reared,
 Deep without harshness, slow
 and strong, 261
 The powerful accents rolled
 along,
 And while he spoke his hand
 was laid
 On captive Gunnar's shrinking
 head.

XIV

'Harold,' he said, 'what rage is
 thine
 To quit the worship of thy line,
 To leave thy Warrior-God? —
 With me is glory or disgrace,
 Mine is the onset and the chase,
 Embattled hosts before my face
 Are withered by a nod. 271
 Wilt thou then forfeit that high
 seat
 Deserved by many a dauntless
 feat
 Among the heroes of thy line,
 Eric and fiery Thorarine? —
 Thou wilt not. Only I can give
 The joys for which the valiant
 live,
 Victory and vengeance — only I
 Can give the joys for which they
 die,
 The immortal tilt — the banquet
 full, 280
 The brimming draught from foe-
 man's skull.
 Mine art thou, witness this thy
 glove,
 The faithful pledge of vassal's
 love.'

XV

'Tempter,' said Harold, firm of heart,
 'I charge thee, hence! whate'er thou art,
 I do defy thee — and resist
 The kindling frenzy of my breast,
 Waked by thy words; and of my mail
 Nor glove nor buckler, splent nor nail,
 Shall rest with thee — that youth release,
 And, God or Demon, part in peace.' —
 'Eivir,' the Shape replied, 'is mine,
 Marked in the birth-hour with my sign.
 Think'st thou that priest with drops of spray
 Could wash that blood-red mark away?
 Or that a borrowed sex and name
 Can abrogate a Godhead's claim?'
 Thrilled this strange speech through Harold's brain,
 He clenched his teeth in high disdain,
 For not his new-born faith subdued
 Some tokens of his ancient mood. —
 'Now, by the hope so lately given
 Of better trust and purer heaven,
 I will assail thee, fiend!' — Then rose
 His mace, and with a storm of blows
 The mortal and the demon close.

XVI

Smoke rolled above, fire flashed around,
 Darkened the sky and shook the ground;
 But not the artillery of hell,

The bickering lightning, nor the rock
 Of turrets to the earthquake's shock,
 Could Harold's courage quell.
 Sternly the Dane his purpose kept,
 And blows on blows resistless heaped,
 Till quailed that demon form,
 And — for his power to hurt or kill
 Was bounded by a higher will —
 Evanished in a storm.
 Nor paused the Champion of the North,
 But raised and bore his Eivir forth
 From that wild scene of fiendish strife
 To light, to liberty, and life!

XVII

He placed her on a bank of moss,
 A silver runnel bubbled by,
 And new-born thoughts his soul engross,
 And tremors yet unknown across
 His stubborn sinews fly,
 The while with timid hand the dew
 Upon her brow and neck he threw,
 And marked how life with rosy hue
 On her pale cheek revived anew
 And glimmered in her eye.
 Inly he said, 'That silken tress —
 What blindness mine that could not guess!
 Or how could page's rugged dress
 That bosom's pride belie?
 O, dull of heart, through wild and wave
 In search of blood and death to rave,
 With such a partner nigh!'

XVIII

Then in the mirrored pool he
 peered, 340
 Blamed his rough locks and
 shaggy beard,
 The stains of recent conflict
 cleared, —

And thus the Champion proved
 That he fears now who never
 feared,

And loves who never loved.
 And Eivir — life is on her cheek
 And yet she will not move or
 speak,

Nor will her eyelid fully ope;
 Perchance it loves, that half-
 shut eye,

Through its long fringe, reserved
 and shy, 350

Affection's opening dawn to
 spy;

And the deep blush, which bids
 its dye

O'er cheek and brow and bosom
 fly,

Speaks shamefacedness and
 hope.

XIX

But vainly seems the Dane to
 seek

For terms his new-born love to
 speak, —

For words, save those of wrath
 and wrong,

Till now were strangers to his
 tongue;

So, when he raised the blushing
 maid,

In blunt and honest terms he
 said — 360

'T were well that maids, when
 lovers woo,

Heard none more soft, were all
 as true —

'Eivir! since thou for many a
 day

Hast followed Harold's way-
 ward way,

It is but meet that in the line
 Of after-life I follow thine.

To-morrow is Saint Cuthbert's
 tide,

And we will grace his altar's
 side,

A Christian knight and Christian
 bride;

And of Witikind's son shall the
 marvel be said 370

That on the same morn he was
 christened and wed.'

CONCLUSION

AND now, Ennui, what ails thee,
 weary maid?

And why these listless looks of
 yawning sorrow?

No need to turn the page as if 't
 were lead,

Or fling aside the volume till to-
 morrow. —

Be cheered — 't is ended — and I
 will not borrow,

To try thy patience more, one
 anecdote

From Bartholine or Perinskiold or
 Snorro.

Then pardon thou thy minstrel,
 who hath wrote

A tale six cantos long, yet scorned
 to add a note.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

THE DYING BARD

AIR — '*Daffydz Gangwen.*'

DINAS EMLINN, lament; for the
moment is nigh,
When mute in the woodlands thine
echoes shall die:
No more by sweet Teivi Cadwallon
shall rave,
And mix his wild notes with the
wild dashing wave.

In spring and in autumn thy
glories of shade
Unhonored shall flourish, unhon-
ored shall fade;
For soon shall be lifeless the eye
and the tongue
That viewed them with rapture,
with rapture that sung.

Thy sons, Dinas Emlinn, may
march in their pride,
And chase the proud Saxon from
Prestatyn's side;
But where is the harp shall give
life to their name?
And where is the bard shall give
heroes their fame?

And O, Dinas Emlinn! thy daugh-
ters so fair,
Who heave the white bosom and
wave the dark hair;
What tuneful enthusiast shall
worship their eye,
When half of their charms with
Cadwallon shall die?

Then adieu, silver Teivi! I quit
thy loved scene
To join the dim choir of the bards
who have been;
With Lewarch, and Meilor, and
Merlin the Old,
And sage Taliessin, high harping
to hold.

And adieu, Dinas Emlinn! still
green be thy shades,
Unconquered thy warriors and
matchless thy maids!
And thou whose faint warblings
my weakness can tell,
Farewell, my loved harp! my last
treasure, farewell!

THE NORMAN HORSE-SHOE

AIR — '*The War-Song of the Men of Glamorgan.*'

RED glows the forge in Striguil's
bounds,
And hammers din, and anvil
sounds,
And armorers with iron toil
Barb many a steed for battle's
broil.
Foul fall the hand which bends
the steel
Around the courser's thundering
heel,
That e'er shall dint a sable wound
On fair Glamorgan's velvet
ground!

From Chepstow's towers ere dawn
of morn
Was heard afar the bugle-horn,
And forth in banded pomp and
pride
Stout Clare and fiery Neville ride.
They swore their banners broad
should gleam
In crimson light on Rymny's
stream;
They vowed Caerphili's sod should
feel
The Norman charger's spurning
heel.

And sooth they swore — the sun
arose,
And Rymny's wave with crimson
glows;

For Clare's red banner, floating
wide,
Rolled down the stream to Severn's
tide!
And sooth they vowed — the tram-
pled green
Showed where hot Neville's charge
had been:
In every sable hoof-tramp stood
A Norman horseman's curdling
blood!

Old Chepstow's brides may curse
the toil
That armed stout Clare for Cam-
brian broil;
Their orphans long the art may
rue,
For Neville's war-horse forged the
shoe.
No more the stamp of armed steed
Shall dint Glamorgan's velvet
mead;
Nor trace be there in early spring
Save of the Fairies' emerald ring.

THE MAID OF TORO

O, Low shone the sun on the fair
lake of Toro,
And weak were the whispers
that waved the dark wood,
All as a fair maiden, bewildered
in sorrow,
Sorely sighed to the breezes and
wept to the flood.
'O saints, from the mansions of
bliss lowly bending!
Sweet Virgin, who hearest the
suppliant's cry!
Now grant my petition in anguish
ascending,
My Henry restore or let Eleanor
die!'

All distant and faint were the
sounds of the battle,
With the breezes they rise, with
the breezes they fail,

Till the shout and the groan and
the conflict's dread rattle,
And the chase's wild clamor,
came loading the gale.
Breathless she gazed on the wood-
lands so dreary;
Slowly approaching a warrior
was seen;
Life's ebbing tide marked his foot-
steps so weary,
Cleft was his helmet and woe
was his mien.

'O, save thee, fair maid, for our
armies are flying!
O, save thee, fair maid, for thy
guardian is low!
Deadly cold on yon heath thy
brave Henry is lying,
And fast through the woodland
approaches the foe.'
Scarce could he falter the tidings
of sorrow,
And scarce could she hear them,
benumbed with despair:
And when the sun sunk on the
sweet lake of Toro,
Forever he set to the Brave and
the Fair.

THE PALMER

'O, OPEN the door, some pity to
show,
Keen blows the northern wind!
The glen is white with the drifted
snow,
And the path is hard to find.

'No outlaw seeks your castle gate,
From chasing the king's deer,
Though even an outlaw's wretched
state
Might claim compassion here.

'A weary Palmer, worn and weak,
I wander for my sin;
O, open, for Our Lady's sake!
A pilgrim's blessing win!

'I'll give you pardons from the
Pope,
And reliques from o'er the sea,—
Or if for these you will not ope,
Yet open for charity.

'The hare is crouching in her form,
The hart beside the hind ;
An aged man amid the storm,
No shelter can I find.

'You hear the Ettrick's sullen roar,
Dark, deep, and strong is he,
And I must ford the Ettrick o'er,
Unless you pity me.

'The iron gate is bolted hard,
At which I knock in vain;
The owner's heart is closer barred,
Who hears me thus complain.

'Farewell, farewell! and Mary
grant,
When old and frail you be,
You never may the shelter want
That's now denied to me.'

The ranger on his couch lay warm,
And heard him plead in vain ;
But oft amid December's storm
He 'll hear that voice again :

For lo! when through the vapors
dank
Morn shone on Ettrick fair,
A corpse amid the alders rank,
The Palmer weltered there.

THE MAID OF NEIDPATH

O, LOVERS' eyes are sharp to
see,
And lovers' ears in hearing ;
And love in life's extremity
Can lend an hour of cheering.
Disease had been in Mary's bower,
And slow decay from mourning,
Though now she sits on Neidpath's
tower
To watch her love's returning.

All sunk and dim her eyes so
bright,
Her form decayed by pining,
Till through her wasted hand at
night

You saw the taper shining ;
By fits, a sultry hectic hue
Across her cheek was flying ;
By fits, so ashy pale she grew,
Her maidens thought her dying.

Yet keenest powers to see and hear
Seemed in her frame residing ;
Before the watch-dog pricked his
ear,

She heard her lover's riding ;
Ere scarce a distant form was
kenned,
She knew, and waved to greet
him ;

And o'er the battlement did bend,
As on the wing to meet him.

He came—he passed—an heed-
less gaze,
As o'er some stranger glancing ;
Her welcome, spoke in faltering
phrase,

Lost in his courser's prancing—
The castle arch, whose hollow tone
Returns each whisper spoken,
Could scarcely catch the feeble
moan

Which told her heart was broken.

WANDERING WILLIE

ALL joy was bereft me the day
that you left me,
And climbed the tall vessel to
sail yon wide sea ;
O weary betide it! I wandered be-
side it,
And banned it for parting my
Willie and me.

Far o'er the wave hast thou fol-
lowed thy fortune,
Oft fought the squadrons of
France and of Spain ;

Ae kiss of welcome's worth twenty
at parting,
Now I hae gotten my Willie
again.

When the sky it was mirk, and the
winds they were wailing,
I sat on the beach wi' the tear
in my ee,
And thought o' the bark where my
Willie was sailing,
And wished that the tempest
could a' blaw on me.

Now that thy gallant ship rides at
her mooring,
Now that my wanderer's in
safety at hame,
Music to me were the wildest
winds' roaring,
That e'er o'er Inch-Keith drove
the dark ocean faem.

When the lights they did blaze,
and the guns they did rattle,
And blithe was each heart for
the great victory,
In secret I wept for the dangers
of battle,
And thy glory itself was scarce
comfort to me.

But now shalt thou tell, while I
eagerly listen,
Of each bold adventure and
every brave scar;
And trust me, I'll smile, though
my een they may glisten,
For sweet after danger's the
tale of the war.

And O, how we doubt when there's
distance 'tween lovers,
When there's naething to speak
to the heart thro' the ee!
How often the kindest and warm-
est prove rovers,
And the love of the faithfulest
ebbs like the sea!

Till, at times—could I help it?—
I pined and I pondered

If love could change notes like
the bird on the tree—
Now I'll ne'er ask if thine eyes
may hae wandered;
Enough, thy leal heart has been
constant to me.

Welcome, from sweeping o'er sea
and through channel,
Hardships and danger despising
for fame,
Furnishing story for glory's bright
annal,
Welcome, my wanderer, to
Jeanie and hame!

Enough now thy story in annals
of glory
Hashumbled the pride of France,
Holland, and Spain;
No more shalt thou grieve me, no
more shalt thou leave me,
I never will part with my Willie
again.

HEALTH TO LORD MELVILLE

AIR — *Carrickfergus*.

SINCE here we are set in array
round the table,
Five hundred good fellows well
met in a hall,
Come listen, brave boys, and I'll
sing as I'm able,
How innocence triumphed and
pride got a fall.
But push round the claret—
Come, stewards, don't spare
it—
With rapture you'll drink to the
toast that I give;
Here, boys,
Off with it merrily—
Melville for ever, and long may he
live!

What were the Whigs doing, when
boldly pursuing
Pitt banished Rebellion, gave
Treason a string;

Why, they swore on their honor,
 for Arthur O'Connor,
 And fought hard for Despard
 against country and king.
 Well, then, we knew, boys,
 Pitt and Melville were true
 boys,
 And the tempest was raised by the
 friends of Reform.
 Ah! woe!
 Weep to his memory;
 Low lies the pilot that weathered
 the storm!

And pray, don't you mind when
 the Blues first were raising,
 And we scarcely could think the
 house safe o'er our heads?
 When villains and coxcombs,
 French politics praising,
 Drove peace from our tables and
 sleep from our beds?
 Our hearts they grew bolder
 When, musket on shoulder,
 Stepped forth our old Statesmen
 example to give.
 Come, boys, never fear,
 Drink the Blue grenadier —
 Here's to old Harry, and long may
 he live!

They would turn us adrift, though
 rely, sir, upon it,
 Our own faithful chronicles war-
 rant us that
 The free mountaineer and his
 bonny blue bonnet
 Have oft gone as far as the regu-
 lar's hat.
 We laugh at their taunting,
 For all we are wanting
 Is license our life for our country
 to give.
 Off with it merrily,
 Horse, foot, and artillery,
 Each loyal Volunteer, long may he
 live!

'Tis not us alone, boys — the Army
 and Navy
 Have each got a slap 'mid their
 politic pranks;

Cornwallis cashiered, that watched
 winters to save ye,
 And the Cape called a bauble
 unworthy of thanks.
 But vain is their taunt,
 No soldier shall want
 The thanks that his country to
 valor can give:
 Come, boys,
 Drink it off merrily, —
 Sir David and Popham, and long
 may they live!

And then our revenue — Lord
 knows how they viewed it,
 While each petty statesman
 talked lofty and big;
 But the beer-tax was weak, as if
 Whitbread had brewed it,
 And the pig-iron duty a shame
 to a pig.
 In vain is their vaunting,
 Too surely there's wanting
 What judgment, experience, and
 steadiness give:
 Come, boys,
 Drink about merrily, —
 Health to sage Melville, and long
 may he live!

Our King, too — our Princess — I
 dare not say more, sir, —
 May Providence watch them
 with mercy and might!
 While there's one Scottish hand
 that can wag a claymore, sir,
 They shall ne'er want a friend to
 stand up for their right.
 Be damned he that dare not, —
 For my part, I'll spare not
 To beauty afflicted a tribute to
 give.
 Fill it up steadily,
 Drink it off readily —
 Here's to the Princess, and long
 may she live!

And since we must not set Auld
 Reekie in glory,
 And make her brown visage as
 light as her heart;

Till each man illumine his own
upper story,
Nor law-book nor lawyer shall
force us to part.
In Grenville and Spencer,
And some few good men, sir,
High talents we honor, slight dif-
ference forgive;
But the Brewer we 'll hoax,
Tallyho to the Fox,
And drink Melville forever, as long
as we live!

HUNTING SONG

WAKEN, lords and ladies gay,
On the mountain dawns the day,
All the jolly chase is here,
With hawk and horse and hunting-
spear!
Hounds are in their couples yell-
ing,
Hawks are whistling, horns are
knelling,
Merrily, merrily, mingle they,
'Waken, lords and ladies gay.'

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
The mist has left the mountain
gray,
Springlets in the dawn are steam-
ing,
Diamonds on the brake are gleam-
ing:
And foresters have busy been
To track the buck in thicket
green;
Now we come to chant our lay,
'Waken, lords and ladies gay.'

Waken, lords and ladies gay,
To the green-wood haste away;
We can show you where he
lies,
Fleet of foot and tall of size;
We can show the marks he
made,
When 'gainst the oak his antlers
frayed;

You shall see him brought to bay,
'Waken, lords and ladies gay.'

Louder, louder chant the lay,
Waken, lords and ladies gay!
Tell them youth and mirth and glee
Run a course as well as we;
Time, stern huntsman, who can
balk,
Stanch as hound and fleet as
hawk?
Think of this and rise with day,
Gentle lords and ladies gay.

SONG

O, SAY not, my love, with that
mortified air,
That your spring-time of plea-
sure is flown,
Nor bid me to maids that are
younger repair
For those raptures that still are
thine own.

Though April his temples may
wreath with the vine,
Its tendrils in infancy curled,
'T is the ardor of August matures
us the wine
Whose life-blood enlivens the
world.

Though thy form that was fash-
ioned as light as a fay's
Has assumed a proportion more
round,
And thy glance that was bright as
a falcon's at gaze
Looks soberly now on the
ground,—

Enough, after absence to meet me
again
Thy steps still with ecstasy
move;
Enough, that those dear sober
glances retain
For me the kind language of
love,

THE RESOLVE

IN IMITATION OF AN OLD ENGLISH POEM

My wayward fate I needs must plain,

Though bootless be the theme ;
I loved and was beloved again,
Yet all was but a dream :
For, as her love was quickly got,
So it was quickly gone ;
No more I'll bask in flame so hot,
But coldly dwell alone.

Not maid more bright than maid
was e'er

My fancy shall beguile,
By flattering word or feigned tear,
By gesture, look, or smile ;
No more I'll call the shaft fair
shot,

Till it has fairly flown,
Nor scorch me at a flame so hot —
I'll rather freeze alone.

Each ambushed Cupid I'll defy
In cheek or chin or brow,
And deem the glance of woman's
eye

As weak as woman's vow :
I'll lightly hold the lady's heart,
That is but lightly won ;
I'll steel my breast to beauty's art,
And learn to live alone.

The flaunting torch soon blazes
out,

The diamond's ray abides ;
The flame its glory hurls about,
The gem its lustre hides ;
Such gem I fondly deemed was
mine,

And glowed a diamond stone,
But, since each eye may see it
shine,
I'll darkling dwell alone.

No waking dreams shall tinge my
thought
With dyes so bright and vain,

No silken net so slightly wrought
Shall tangle me again :
No more I'll pay so dear for wit,
I'll live upon mine own,
Nor shall wild passion trouble it, —
I'll rather dwell alone.

And thus I'll hush my heart to
rest, —

' Thy loving labor's lost ;
Thou shalt no more be wildly blest,
To be so strangely crost :
The widowed turtles mateless die,
The phoenix is but one ;
They seek no loves — no more will
I —
I'll rather dwell alone.'

EPITAPH

DESIGNED FOR A MONUMENT IN
LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL, AT
THE BURIAL-PLACE OF THE
FAMILY OF MISS SEWARD

AMID these aisles where once his
precepts showed

The heavenward pathway which
in life he trode,

This simple tablet marks a Fa-
ther's bier,

And those he loved in life in death
are near ;

For him, for them, a Daughter
bade it rise,

Memorial of domestic charities.

Still wouldst thou know why o'er
the marble spread

In female grace the willow droops
her head ;

Why on her branches, silent and
unstrung,

The minstrel harp is emblematic
hung ;

What poet's voice is smothered
here in dust

Till waked to join the chorus of
the just, —

Lo! one brief line an answer sad
supplies,

Honored, beloved, and mourned,
 here SEWARD lies !
 Her worth, her warmth of heart,
 let friendship say, —
 Go seek her genius in her living lay.

PROLOGUE

TO MISS BAILLIE'S PLAY OF 'THE
 FAMILY LEGEND'

'T is sweet to hear expiring Sum-
 mer's sigh,
 Through forests tinged with rus-
 set, wail and die ;
 'T is sweet and sad the latest notes
 to hear
 Of distant music, dying on the ear ;
 But far more sadly sweet on for-
 eign strand
 We list the legends of our native
 land,
 Linked as they come with every
 tender tie,
 Memorials dear of youth and in-
 fancy.

Chief thy wild tales, romantic
 Caledon,
 Wake keen remembrance in each
 hardy son.
 Whether on India's burning coasts
 he toil
 Or till Acadia's winter-fettered
 soil,
 He hears with throbbing heart and
 moistened eyes,
 And, as he hears, what dear illu-
 sions rise !
 It opens on his soul his native
 dell,
 The woods wild waving and the
 water's swell ;
 Tradition's theme, the tower that
 threatens the plain,
 The mossy cairn that hides the
 hero slain ;
 The cot beneath whose simple
 porch were told
 By gray-haired patriarch the tales
 of old,

The infant group that hushed their
 sports the while,
 And the dear maid who listened
 with a smile.
 The wanderer, while the vision
 warms his brain,
 Is denizen of Scotland once again.

Are such keen feelings to the
 crowd confined,
 And sleep they in the poet's gifted
 mind ?
 O no ! For she, within whose
 mighty page
 Each tyrant Passion shows his
 woe and rage,
 Has felt the wizard influence they
 inspire,
 And to your own traditions tuned
 her lyre.
 Yourselves shall judge — whoe'er
 has raised the sail
 By Mull's dark coast has heard
 this evening's tale.
 The plaided boatman, resting on
 his oar,
 Points to the fatal rock amid the
 roar
 Of whitening waves, and tells
 whate'er to-night
 Our humble stage shall offer to
 your sight ;
 Proudly preferred that first our
 efforts give
 Scenes glowing from her pen to
 breathe and live ;
 More proudly yet, should Caledon
 approve
 The filial token of a daughter's
 love.

THE POACHER

WRITTEN IN IMITATION OF
 CRABBE

WELCOME, grave stranger, to our
 green retreats
 Where health with exercise and
 freedom meets !

Thrice welcome, sage, whose
 philosophic plan
 By nature's limits metes the rights
 of man ;
 Generous as he who now for free-
 dom bawls,
 Now gives full value for true In-
 dian shawls :
 O'er court, o'er custom-house, his
 shoe who flings,
 Now bilks excisemen and now
 bullies kings.
 Like his, I ween, thy comprehen-
 sive mind
 Holds laws as mouse-traps baited
 for mankind : 10
 Thine eye applausive each sly ver-
 min sees,
 That balks the snare yet battens
 on the cheese ;
 Thine ear has heard with scorn in-
 stead of awe
 Our bucks-kinned justices expound
 the law,
 Wire-draw the acts that fix for
 wires the pain,
 And for the netted partridge noose
 the swain ;
 And thy vindictive arm would fain
 have broke
 The last light fetter of the feudal
 yoke,
 To give the denizens of wood and
 wild,
 Nature's free race, to each her
 free-born child. 20
 Hence hast thou marked with
 grief fair London's race,
 Mocked with the boon of one poor
 Easter chase,
 And longed to send them forth as
 free as when
 Poured o'er Chantilly the Parisian
 train,
 When musket, pistol, blunderbuss,
 combined,
 And scarce the field-pieces were
 left behind !
 A squadron's charge each leveret's
 heart dismayed,

On every covey fired a bold bri-
 gade ;
La Douce Humanite approved the
 sport,
 For great the alarm indeed, yet
 small the hurt ; 30
 Shouts patriotic solemnized the
 day,
 And Seine reëchoed *Vive la Li-
 berte !*
 But mad *Citoyen*, meek *Monsieur*
 again,
 With some few added links re-
 sumes his chain.
 Then, since such scenes to France
 no more are known,
 Come, view with me a hero of
 thine own,
 One whose free actions vindicate
 the cause
 Of sylvan liberty o'er feudal laws.

Seek we yon glades where the
 proud oak o'ertops
 Wide-waving seas of birch and
 hazel copse, 40
 Leaving between deserted isles of
 land
 Where stunted heath is patched
 with ruddy sand,
 And lonely on the waste the yew
 is seen,
 Or straggling hollies spread a
 brighter green.
 Here, little worn and winding dark
 and steep,
 Our scarce marked path descends
 yon dingle deep :
 Follow — but heedful, cautious of
 a trip —
 In earthly mire philosophy may
 slip.
 Step slow and wary o'er that
 swampy stream,
 Till, guided by the charcoal's
 smothering steam, 50
 We reach the frail yet barricaded
 door
 Of hovel formed for poorest of the
 poor ;

No hearth the fire, no vent the
 smoke receives,
 The walls are wattles and the
 covering leaves;
 For, if such hut, our forest statutes
 say,
 Rise in the progress of one night
 and day —
 Though placed where still the Con-
 queror's hest o'erawe,
 And his son's stirrup shines the
 badge of law —
 The builder claims the unenviable
 boon,
 To tenant dwelling, framed as
 slight and soon 60
 As wigwam wild that shrouds the
 native frore
 On the bleak coast of frost-barred
 Labrador.

Approach and through the un-
 latticed window peep —
 Nay, shrink not back, the inmate
 is asleep;
 Sunk mid yon sordid blankets till
 the sun
 Stoop to the west, the plunderer's
 toils are done.
 Loaded and primed and prompt
 for desperate hand,
 Rifle and fowling-piece beside him
 stand;
 While round the hut are in dis-
 order laid
 The tools and booty of his lawless
 trade; 70
 For force or fraud, resistance or
 escape,
 The crow, the saw, the bludgeon,
 and the crape.
 His pilfered powder in yon nook
 he hoards,
 And the filched lead the church's
 roof affords —
 Hence shall the rector's congrega-
 tion fret,
 That while his sermon 's dry his
 walls are wet.

The fish-spear barbed, the sweep-
 ing net are there,
 Doe-hides, and pheasant plumes,
 and skins of hare,
 Cordage for toils and wiring for
 the snare.
 Bartered for game from chase or
 warren won, 80
 Yon cask holds moonlight, run
 when moon was none;
 And late-snatched spoils lie stowed
 in hutch apart
 To wait the associate higgler's
 evening cart.

Look on his pallet foul and mark
 his rest:
 What scenes perturbed are acting
 in his breast!
 His sable brow is wet and wrung
 with pain,
 And his dilated nostril toils in
 vain;
 For short and scant the breath
 each effort draws,
 And 'twixt each effort Nature
 claims a pause.
 Beyond the loose and sable neck-
 cloth stretched, 90
 His sinewy throat seems by con-
 vulsion twitched,
 While the tongue falters, as to
 utterance loath,
 Sounds of dire import — watch-
 word, threat, and oath.
 Though, stupefied by toil and
 drugged with gin,
 The body sleep, the restless guest
 within
 Now plies on wood and wold his
 lawless trade,
 Now in the fangs of justice wakes
 dismayed. —

' Was that wild start of terror
 and despair,
 Those bursting eyeballs and that
 wildered air,
 Signs of compunction for a mur-
 dered hare? 100

Do the locks bristle and the eye-
brows arch
For grouse or partridge massacred
in March ?'

No, scoffer, no ! Attend, and
mark with awe,
There is no wicket in the gate of
law !
He that would e'er so lightly set
ajar
That awful portal must undo each
bar :
Tempting occasion, habit, passion,
pride,
Will join to storm the breach and
force the barrier wide.

That ruffian, whom true men
avoid and dread,
Whom bruisers, poachers, smug-
glers, call Black Ned, ¹¹⁰
Was Edward Mansell once ; — the
lightest heart
That ever played on holiday his
part !
The leader he in every Christmas
game,
The harvest-feast grew blither
when he came,
And liveliest on the chords the
bow did glance
When Edward named the tune
and led the dance.
Kind was his heart, his passions
quick and strong,
Hearty his laugh, and jovial was
his song ;
And if he loved a gun, his father
swore,
'T was but a trick of youth would
soon be o'er, ¹²⁰
Himself had done the same some
thirty years before.'

But he whose humors spurn
law's awful yoke
Must herd with those by whom
law's bonds are broke ;
The common dread of justice soon
allies

The clown who robs the warren
or excise
With sterner felons trained to act
more dread,
Even with the wretch by whom
his fellow bled.
Then, as in plagues the foul con-
tagions pass,
Leavening and festering the cor-
rupted mass,
Guilt leagues with guilt while
mutual motives draw, ¹³⁰
Their hope impunity, their fear
the law ;
Their foes, their friends, their ren-
dezvous the same,
Till the revenue balked or pilfered
game
Flesh the young culprit, and ex-
ample leads
To darker villany and direr deeds.

Wild howled the wind the forest
glades along,
And oft the owl renewed her dis-
mal song ;
Around the spot where erst he felt
the wound,
Red William's spectre walked his
midnight round.
When o'er the swamp he cast his
blighting look, ¹⁴⁰
From the green marshes of the
stagnant brook
The bittern's sullen shout the
sedges shook !
The waning moon with storm-pre-
saging gleam
Now gave and now withheld her
doubtful beam ;
The old Oak stooped his arms,
then flung them high,
Bellowing and groaning to the
troubled sky —
'T was then that, couched amid
the brushwood sear,
In Malwood-walk young Mansell
watched the deer :
The fattest buck received his
deadly shot —

The watchful keeper heard and
sought the spot. 150
Stout were their hearts, and stub-
born was their strife;
O'erpowered at length the Outlaw
drew his knife.
Next morn a corpse was found
upon the fell —
The rest his waking agony may
tell!

THE BOLD DRAGOON

OR, THE PLAIN OF BADAJOS

'T WAS a Maréchal of France, and
he fain would honor gain,
And he longed to take a passing
glance at Portugal from
Spain;
With his flying guns this gal-
lant gay,
And boasted corps d'armée —
O, he feared not our dragoons with
their long swords boldly rid-
ing,
Whack, fal de ral, etc.

To Campo Mayor come, he had
quietly sat down,
Just a fricassee to pick while his
soldiers sacked the town,
When, 't was peste! morbleu!
mon Général,
Hear the English bugle-call!
And behold the light dragoons
with their long swords boldly
riding,
Whack, fal de ral, etc.

Right about went horse and foot,
artillery and all,
And, as the devil leaves a house,
they tumbled through the
wall;
They took no time to seek the
door,
But, best foot set before —

O, they ran from our dragoons
with their long swords boldly
riding,
Whack, fal de ral, etc.

Those valiant men of France they
had scarcely fled a mile,
When on their flank there soused
at once the British rank and
file;
For Long, De Grey, and Otway
then
Ne'er minded one to ten,
But came on like light dragoons
with their long swords boldly
riding,
Whack, fal de ral, etc.

Three hundred British lads they
made three thousand reel,
Their hearts were made of English
oak, their swords of Sheffield
steel,
Their horses were in Yorkshire
bred,
And Beresford them led;
So huzza for brave dragoons with
their long swords boldly rid-
ing,
Whack, fal de ral, etc.

Then here's a health to Wellin-
ton, to Beresford, to Long,
And a single word of Bonaparte
before I close my song:
The eagles that to fight he
brings
Should serve his men with
wings,
When they meet the bold dragoons
with their long swords boldly
riding,
Whack, fal de ral, etc.

ON THE MASSACRE OF GLENCOE

'O, TELL me, Harper, wherefore
flow
Thy wayward notes of wail and
woe

Far down the desert of Glencoe,
Where none may list their melody?

Say, harp'st thou to the mists that fly,
Or to the dun-deer glancing by,
Or to the eagle that from high
Screams chorus to thy minstrelsy?

'No, not to these, for they have rest,—

The mist-wreath has the mountain-crest,

The stag his lair, the erne her nest,

Abode of lone security.

But those for whom I pour the lay,

Not wild-wood deep nor mountain gray,

Not this deep dell that shrouds from day,

Could screen from treacherous cruelty.

'Their flag was furled and mute their drum,

The very household dogs were dumb,

Unwont to bay at guests that come
In guise of hospitality.

His blithest notes the piper plied,
Her gayest snood the maiden tied,

The dame her distaff flung aside
To tend her kindly housewifery.

'The hand that mingled in the meal
At midnight drew the felon steel,
And gave the host's kind breast to feel

Meed for his hospitality!

The friendly hearth which warmed that hand

At midnight armed it with the brand

That bade destruction's flames expand

Their red and fearful blazonry.

'Then woman's shriek was heard
in vain.

Nor infancy's unpitied plain,
More than the warrior's groan,
could gain

Respite from ruthless butchery!
The winter wind that whistled shrill,

The snows that night that cloked the hill,

Though wild and pitiless, had still

Far more than Southern clemency.

'Long have my harp's best notes
been gone,

Few are its strings and faint their tone,

They can but sound in desert lone
Their gray-haired master's misery.

Were each gray hair a minstrel string,

Each chord should imprecations fling,

Till startled Scotland loud should ring,

"Revenge for blood and treachery!"

SONG

FOR THE ANNIVERSARY MEETING OF THE PITT CLUB OF SCOTLAND

O, DREAD was the time, and more
dreadful the omen,

When the brave on Marengo lay
slaughtered in vain,

And beholding broad Europe
bowed down by her foemen,

PITT closed in his anguish the
map of her reign!

Not the fate of broad Europe could
bend his brave spirit

To take for his country the safety
of shame;

O, then in her triumph remember
his merit,
And hallow the goblet that flows
to his name.

Round the husbandman's head
while he traces the furrow
The mists of the winter may
mingle with rain,
He may plough it with labor and
sow it in sorrow,
And sigh while he fears he has
sowed it in vain;
He may die ere his children shall
reap in their gladness,
But the blithe harvest-home
shall remember his claim;
And their jubilee-shout shall be
softened with sadness,
While they hallow the goblet
that flows to his name.

Though anxious and timeless his
life was expended,
In toils for our country pre-
served by his care,
Though he died ere one ray o'er
the nations ascended,
To light the long darkness of
doubt and despair;
The storms he endured in our Bri-
tain's December,
The perils his wisdom foresaw
and o'ercame,
In her glory's rich harvest shall
Britain remember,
And hallow the goblet that flows
to his name.

Nor forget His gray head who, all
dark in affliction,
Is deaf to the tale of our victo-
ries won,
And to sounds the most dear to
paternal affection,
The shout of his people ap-
plauding his SON;
By his firmness unmoved in suc-
cess and disaster,
By his long reign of virtue, re-
member his claim!

With our tribute to PITT join the
praise of his Master,
Though a tear stain the goblet
that flows to his name.

Yet again fill the wine-cup and
change the sad measure,
The rites of our grief and our
gratitude paid,
To our Prince, to our Heroes, de-
votè the bright treasure,
The wisdom that planned, and
the zeal that obeyed!
Fill WELLINGTON'S cup till it
beam like his glory,
Forget not our own brave DAL-
HOUSIE and GRÆME;
A thousand years hence hearts
shall bound at their story,
And hallow the goblet that flows
to their fame.

LINES

ADDRESSED TO RANALD MAC-
DONALD, ESQ., OF STAFFA

STAFFA, sprung from high Mac-
donald
Worthy branch of old Clan-Ran-
ald!
Staffa! king of all kind fellows!
Well befall thy hills and val-
leys,
Lakes and inlets, deeps and shal-
lows—
Cliffs of darkness, caves of won-
der,
Echoing the Atlantic thunder;
Mountains which the gray mist
covers,
Where the Chieftain spirit hov-
ers,
Pausing while his pinions
quiver,
Stretched to quit our land for-
ever!
Each kind influence reign above
thee!

Warmer heart 'twixt this and
Staffa
Beats not than in heart of
Staffa!

PHAROS LOQUITUR

FAR in the bosom of the deep,
O'er these wild shelves my watch
I keep;
A ruddy gem of changeful light,
Bound on the dusky brow of night,
The seaman bids my lustre hail,
And scorns to strike his timorous
sail.

LETTERS IN VERSE

ON THE VOYAGE WITH THE COM-
MISSIONERS OF NORTHERN
LIGHTS

To His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch

LIGHTHOUSE YACHT IN THE SOUND OF
LERWICK, ZETLAND, 8th August, 1814.

HEALTH to the chieftain from
his clansman true!
From her true minstrel, health to
fair Buccleuch!
Health from the isles where dewy
Morning weaves
Her chaplet with the tints that
Twilight leaves;
Where late the sun scarce van-
ished from the sight,
And his bright pathway graced
the short-lived night,
Though darker now as autumn's
shades extend
The north winds whistle and the
mists ascend!
Health from the land where eddy-
ing whirlwinds toss
The storm-rocked *cradle* of the
Cape of Noss;
On outstretched cords the giddy
engine slides,

His own strong arm the bold ad-
venturer guides,
And he that lists such desperate
feat to try
May, like the sea-mew, skim 'twixt
surf and sky,
And feel the mid-air gales around
him blow,
And see the billows rage five hun-
dred feet below.

Here, by each stormy peak and
desert shore,
The hardy islesman tugs the dar-
ing oar,
Practised alike his venturous
course to keep
Through the white breakers or the
pathless deep,
By ceaseless peril and by toil to
gain
A wretched pittance from the nig-
gard main.
And when the worn-out drudge old
ocean leaves,
What comfort greets him and what
hut receives?
Lady! the worst your presence ere
has cheered —
When want and sorrow fled as
you appeared —
Were to a Zetlander as the high
dome
Of proud Drumlanrig to my hum-
ble home.
Here rise no groves and here no
gardens blow,
Here even the hardy heath scarce
dares to grow;
But rocks on rocks, in mist and
storm arrayed,
Stretch far to sea their giant co-
lonnade,
With many a cavern seamed, the
dreary haunt
Of the dun seal and swarthy cor-
morant.
Wild round their rifted brows,
with frequent cry

As of lament, the gulls and gannets fly,
And from their sable base with sullen sound
In sheets of whitening foam the waves rebound.

Yet even these coasts a touch of envy gain
From those whose land has known oppression's chain; 40
For here the industrious Dutchman comes once more
To moor his fishing craft by Bressay's shore,
Greets every former mate and brother tar,
Marvels how Lerwick 'scaped the rage of war,
Tells many a tale of Gallic outrage done,
And ends by blessing God and Wellington.
Here too the Greenland tar, a fiercer guest,
Claims a brief hour of riot, not of rest;
Proves each wild frolic that in wine has birth,
And wakes the land with brawls and boisterous mirth. 50
A sadder sight on yon poor vessel's prow
The captive Norseman sits in silent woe,
And eyes the flags of Britain as they flow.
Hard fate of war, which bade her terrors sway
His destined course and seize so mean a prey,
A bark with planks so warped and seams so riven
She scarce might face the gentlest airs of heaven:
Pensive he sits, and questions oft if none
Can list his speech and understand his moan;
In vain — no Islesman now can use the tongue 60

Of the bold Norse from whom their lineage sprung.
Not thus of old the Norsemen hither came,
Won by the love of danger or of fame;
On every storm-beat cape a shapeless tower
Tells of their wars, their conquests, and their power;
For ne'er for Grecia's vales nor Latian land
Was fiercer strife than for this barren strand;
A race severe, the isle and ocean lords
Loved for its own delight the strife of swords;
With scornful laugh the mortal pang defied, 70
And blest their gods that they in battle died.

Such were the sires of Zetland's simple race,
And still the eye may faint resemblance trace
In the blue eye, tall form, proportion fair,
The limbs athletic, and the long light hair —
Such was the mien, as Scald and Minstrel sings,
Of fair-haired Harold, first of Norway's Kings; —
But their high deeds to scale these crags confined,
Their only welfare is with waves and wind.

Why should I talk of Mousa's castle coast? 80
Why of the horrors of the Sunburgh Rost?
May not these bald disjointed lines suffice,
Penned while my comrades whirl the rattling dice —
While down the cabin skylight lessening shine

The rays, and eve is chased with
mirth and wine?
Imagined, while down Mousa's
desert bay
Our well-trimmed vessel urged her
nimble way,
While to the freshening breeze she
leaned her side,
And bade her bowsprit kiss the
foamy tide?

Such are the lays that Zetland
Isles supply; 90
Drenched with the drizzly spray
and dropping sky,
Weary and wet, a sea-sick min-
strel I.

W. SCOTT.

POSTSCRIPTUM

KIRKWALL, ORKNEY, Aug. 13, 1814.

IN respect that your Grace has
commissioned a Kraken,
You will please be informed that
they seldom are taken;
It is January two years, the Zet-
land folks say,
Since they saw the last Kraken in
Scalloway bay;
He lay in the offing a fortnight or
more,
But the devil a Zetlander put from
the shore,
Though bold in the seas of the
North to assail
The morse and the sea-horse, the
grampus and whale. 100
If your Grace thinks I'm writing
the thing that is not,
You may ask at a namesake of
ours, Mr. Scott—
He's not from our clan, though his
merits deserve it,
But springs, I'm informed, from
the Scotts of Scotstarvet;—
He questioned the folks who be-
held it with eyes,

But they differed confoundedly as
to its size.
For instance, the modest and diffi-
dent swore
That it seemed like the keel of a
ship and no more—
Those of eyesight more clear or of
fancy more high
Said it rose like an island 'twixt
ocean and sky — 110
But all of the hulk had a steady
opinion
That 't was sure a *live* subject of
Neptune's dominion—
And I think, my Lord Duke, your
Grace hardly would wish,
To cumber your house, such a ket-
tle of fish.
Had your order related to night-
caps or hose
Or mittens of worsted, there's
plenty of those.
Or would you be pleased but to
fancy a whale?
And direct me to send it—by sea
or by mail?
The season, I'm told, is nigh over,
but still
I could get you one fit for the lake
at Bowhill. 120
Indeed, as to whales, there's no
need to be thrifty,
Since one day last fortnight two
hundred and fifty,
Pursued by seven Orkneymen's
boats and no more,
Betwixt Truffness and Luffness
were drawn on the shore!
You'll ask if I saw this same
wonderful sight;
I own that I did not, but easily
might—
For this mighty shoal of levia-
thans lay
On our lee-beam a mile, in the loop
of the bay,
And the islesmen of Sanda were
all at the spoil,
And *flinching*—so term it—the
blubber to boil;— 130

Ye spirits of lavender, drown the
 reflection
 That awakes at the thoughts of
 this odorous dissection. —
 To see this huge marvel full fain
 would we go,
 But Wilson, the wind, and the
 current said no.
 We have now got to Kirkwall, and
 needs I must stare
 When I think that in verse I have
 once called it *fair*:
 'Tis a base little borough, both
 dirty and mean —
 There is nothing to hear and
 there's naught to be seen,
 Save a church where of old times
 a prelate harangued,
 And a palace that's built by an
 earl that was hanged. 140
 But farewell to Kirkwall — aboard
 we are going,
 The anchor's a-peak and the
 breezes are blowing;
 Our commodore calls all his band
 to their places,
 And 't is time to release you —
 good-night to your Graces!

SONGS AND VERSES FROM
WAVERLEY

I

'AND DID YE NOT HEAR OF A
 MIRTH BEFELL'

*To the tune of 'I have been a Fiddler,'
 etc.*

AND did ye not hear of a mirth
 befell
 The morrow after a wedding
 day,
 And carrying a bride at home to
 dwell?
 And away to Tewin, away,
 away!

The quintain was set, and the gar-
 lands were made,
 'Tis pity old customs should
 ever decay;
 And woe be to him that was horsed
 on a jade,
 For he carried no credit away,
 away.

We met a concert of fiddle-de-
 dees;
 We set them a-cockhorse, and
 made them play
 The winning of Bullen, and Upsey-
 frees,
 And away to Tewin, away, away!

There was ne'er a lad in all the
 parish
 That would go to the plough
 that day;
 But on his fore-horse his wench he
 carries,
 And away to Tewin, away, away!

The butler was quick, and the ale
 he did tap,
 The maidens did make the cham-
 ber full gay;
 The servants did give me a fud-
 dling cup,
 And I did carry 't away, away.

The smith of the town his liquor
 so took,
 That he was persuaded that the
 ground looked blue;
 And I dare boldly be sworn on a
 book,
 Such smiths as he there's but a
 few.

A posset was made, and the
 women did sip,
 And simpering said, they could
 eat no more;
 Full many a maiden was laid on
 the lip, —
 I'll say no more, but give o'er,
 give o'er.

II

'LATE, WHEN THE AUTUMN
EVENING FELL'

From chapter v.

LATE, when the autumn evening
fell
On Mirkwood - Mere's romantic
dell,
The lake returned, in chastened
gleam,
The purple cloud, the golden beam :
Reflected in the crystal pool,
Headland and bank lay fair and
cool ;
The weather-tinted rock and tower,
Each drooping tree, each fairy
flower,
So true, so soft, the mirror gave,
As if there lay beneath the wave,
Secure from trouble, toil, and care,
A world than earthly world more
fair.

But distant winds began to wake,
And roused the Genius of the
Lake !

He heard the groaning of the oak,
And donned at once his sable
cloak,

As warrior, at the battle cry,
Invests him with his panoply :
Then, as the whirlwind nearer
pressed,

He 'gan to shake his foamy crest
O'er furrowed brow and black-
ened cheek,

And bade his surge in thunder
speak.

In wild and broken eddies whirled,
Flitted that fond ideal world ;
And, to the shore in tumult tost,
The realms of fairy bliss were lost.

Yet, with a stern delight and
strange,
I saw the spirit-stirring change
As warred the wind with wave and
wood.

Upon the ruined tower I stood,
And felt my heart more strongly
bound,
Responsive to the lofty sound,
While, joying in the mighty roar,
I mourned that tranquil scene no
more.

So, on the idle dreams of youth
Breaks the loud trumpet-call of
truth,
Bids each fair vision pass away,
Like landscape on the lake that
lay,
As fair, as fitting, and as frail,
As that which fled the autumn
gale —

Forever dead to fancy's eye
Be each gay form that glided by,
While dreams of love and lady's
charms
Give place to honor and to arms !

III

'THE KNIGHT'S TO THE MOUN-
TAIN'

From chapter ix.

THE Knight's to the mountain
His bugle to wind ;
The lady's to greenwood
Her garland to bind.
The bower of Burd Ellen
Has moss on the floor,
That the step of Lord William
Be silent and sure.

IV

'IT'S UP GLEMBARCHAN'S
BRAES I GAED'

From chapter xi.

IT'S up Glembarchan's braes I
gaed,
And o'er the bent of Killiebraid,

And mony a weary cast I made
To cuittle the moor-fowl's tail.

If up a bonny black-cock should
spring,
To whistle him down wi' a slug in
his wing,
And strap him on to my lunzie
string,
Right seldom would I fail.

V

'HIE AWAY, HIE AWAY'

From chapter xii.

HIE away, hie away,
Over bank and over brae,
Where the copsewood is the green-
est,
Where the fountains glisten sheen-
est,
Where the lady-fern grows strong-
est,
Where the morning dew lies long-
est,
Where the black-cock sweetest
sips it,
Where the fairy latest trips it:
Hie to haunts right seldom seen,
Lovely, lonesome, cool, and green,
Over bank and over brae,
Hie away, hie away.

VI

ST. SWITHIN'S CHAIR

From chapter xiii.

ON Hallow-Mass Eve, ere you
boune ye to rest,
Ever beware that your couch be
blessed;
Sign it with cross, and sain it with
bead,
Sing the Ave and say the Creed.

For on Hallow-Mass Eve the
Night-Hag will ride,
And all her nine-fold sweeping on
by her side,
Whether the wind sing lowly or
loud,
Sailing through moonshine or
swathed in the cloud.

The Lady she sate in St. Swithin's
Chair,
The dew of the night has damped
her hair:
Her cheek was pale, but resolved
and high
Was the word of her lip and the
glance of her eye.

She muttered the spell of Swithin
bold,
When his naked foot traced the
midnight wold,
When he stopped the Hag as she
rode the night,
And bade her descend and her
promise plight.

He that dare sit on St. Swithin's
Chair
When the Night-Hag wings the
troubled air,
Questions three, when he speaks
the spell,
He may ask, and she must tell.

The Baron has been with King
Robert his liege,
These three long years in battle
and siege;
News are there none of his weal
or his woe,
And fain the Lady his fate would
know.

She shudders and stops as the
charm she speaks;—
Is it the moody owl that shrieks?
Or is that sound, betwixt laughter
and scream,
The voice of the Demon who
haunts the stream?

The moan of the wind sunk silent
and low,
And the roaring torrent had ceased
to flow;
The calm was more dreadful than
raging storm,
When the cold gray mist brought
the ghastly form!

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VII

'YOUNG MEN WILL LOVE THEE
MORE FAIR AND MORE FAST'

From chapter xiv.

YOUNG men will love thee more
fair and more fast!

*Heard ye so merry the little bird
sing?*

Old men's love the longest will last,
*And the throstle-cock's head is
under his wing.*

The young man's wrath is like
light straw on fire;

*Heard ye so merry the little bird
sing?*

But like red-hot steel is the old
man's ire,

*And the throstle-cock's head is
under his wing.*

The young man will brawl at the
evening board;

*Heard ye so merry the little bird
sing?*

But the old man will draw at the
dawning the sword,

*And the throstle-cock's head is
under his wing.*

VIII

FLORA MACIVOR'S SONG

From chapter xxii.

THERE is mist on the mountain,
and night on the vale,

But more dark is the sleep of the
sons of the Gael.

A stranger commanded — it sunk
on the land,

It has frozen each heart and be-
numbed every hand!

The dirk and the target lie sordid
with dust,

The bloodless claymore is but red-
dened with rust;

On the hill or the glen if a gun
should appear,

It is only to war with the heath-
cock or deer.

The deeds of our sires if our bards
should rehearse,

Let a blush or a blow be the meed
of their verse!

Be mute every string and be
hushed every tone

That shall bid us remember the
fame that is flown!

But the dark hours of night and
of slumber are past,

The morn on our mountains is
dawning at last;

Glenaladale's peaks are illumed
with the rays,

And the streams of Glenfinnan
leap bright in the blaze.

O high-minded Moray! — the ex-
iled — the dear! —

In the blush of the dawning the
Standard uprear!

Wide, wide to the winds of the
north let it fly,

Like the sun's latest flash when
the tempest is nigh!

Ye sons of the strong, when that
dawning shall break,

Need the harp of the aged remind
you to wake?

That dawn never beamed on your
forefathers' eye,

But it roused each high chieftain
to vanquish or die.

O, sprung from the Kings who in
Islay kept state,
Proud chiefs of Clan-Ranald, Glen-
gary, and Sleat!
Combine like three streams from
one mountain of snow,
And resistless in union rush down
on the foe!

True son of Sir Evan, undaunted
Lochiel,
Place thy targe on thy shoulder
and burnish thy steel!
Rough Keppoch, give breath to
thy bugle's bold swell,
Till far Coryarrick resound to the
knell!

Stern son of Lord Kenneth, high
chief of Kintail,
Let the stag in thy standard bound
wild in the gale!
May the race of Clan-Gillian, the
fearless and free,
Remember Glenlivet, Harlaw, and
Dundee!

Let the clan of gray Fingon, whose
offspring has given
Such heroes to earth and such
martyrs to heaven,
Unite with the race of renowned
Rorri More,
To launch the long galley and
stretch to the oar!

How Mac-Shimei will joy when
their chief shall display
The yew-crested bonnet o'er
tresses of gray!
How the race of wronged Alpine
and murdered Glencoe
Shall shout for revenge when they
pour on the foe!

Ye sons of brown Dermid, who
slew the wild boar,
Resume the pure faith of the great
Callum-More!

Mac-Niel of the Islands, and Moy
of the Lake,
For honor, for freedom, for ven-
geance awake!

Awake on your hills, on your is-
lands awake,
Brave sons of the mountain, the
frith, and the lake!

'Tis the bugle — but not for the
chase is the call;
'Tis the pibroch's shrill summons
— but not to the hall.

'Tis the summons of heroes for
conquest or death,
When the banners are blazing on
mountain and heath;
They call to the dirk, the claymore,
and the targe,
To the march and the muster, the
line and the charge.

Be the brand of each chieftain like
Fin's in his ire!
May the blood through his veins
flow like currents of fire!
Burst the base foreign yoke as
your sires did of yore!
Or die like your sires, and endure
it no more!

IX

TO AN OAK TREE

IN THE CHURCHYARD OF ———, IN THE
HIGHLANDS OF SCOTLAND, SAID TO
MARK THE GRAVE OF CAPTAIN WOGAN,
KILLED IN 1649

From chapter xxix.

EMBLEM of England's ancient
faith,
Full proudly may thy branches
wave,
Where loyalty lies low in death,
And valor fills a timeless grave.

And thou, brave tenant of the
tomb!

Repine not if our clime deny,
Above thine honored sod to bloom,
The flowerets of a milder sky.

These owe their birth to genial
May;

Beneath a fiercer sun they pine,
Before the winter storm decay —

And can their worth be type of
thine?

No! for 'mid storms of Fate op-
posing,

Still higher swelled thy daunt-
less heart,

And, while Despair the scene was
closing,

Commenced thy brief but bril-
liant part.

'T was then thou sought'st on
Albyn's hill,

(When England's sons the strife
resigned,)

A rugged race resisting still,
And unsubdued, though unre-
fined.

Thy death's hour heard no kin-
dred wail,

No holy knell thy requiem rung;
Thy mourners were the plaided
Gael,

Thy dirge the clamorous pibroch
sung.

Yet who, in Fortune's summer-
shine

To waste life's longest term
away,

Would change that glorious dawn
of thine

Though darkened ere its noon-
tide day?

Be thine the Tree whose dauntless
boughs

Brave summer's drought and
winter's gloom!

Rome bound with oak her patriot's
brows,

As Albyn shadows Wogan's
tomb.

X

'WE ARE BOUND TO DRIVE THE
BULLOCKS'

From chapter xxxviii.

WE are bound to drive the bul-
locks,

All by hollows, hirsts, and hillocks,
Through the sleet and through
the rain.

When the moon is beaming low
On frozen lake and hills of snow,
Bold and heartily we go,
And all for little gain.

XI

'BUT FOLLOW, FOLLOW ME'

From chapter lxiii.

BUT follow, follow me,
While glow-worms light the lea,
I'll show ye where the dead should
be —

Each in his shroud,
While winds pipe loud,
And the red moon peeps dim
through the cloud.

Follow, follow me:
Brave should he be
That treads by the night the dead
man's lea.

FOR A' THAT AN' A' THAT

A NEW SONG TO AN OLD TUNE

THOUGH right be aft put down by
strength,

As mony a day we saw that,
The true and leilfu' cause at length
Shall bear the grie for a' that!

For a' that an' a' that,
 Guns, guillotines, and a' that,
 The Fleur-de-lis, that lost her
 right,
 Is queen again for a' that!

We'll twine her in a friendly knot
 With England's Rose, and a'
 that;
 The Shamrock shall not be forgot,
 For Wellington made bra' that.
 The Thistle, though her leaf be
 rude,
 Yet faith we'll no misca' that,
 She sheltered in her solitude
 The Fleur-de-lis, for a' that.

The Austrian Vine, the Prussian
 Pine,
 (For Blucher's sake, hurra
 that,)

The Spanish Olive, too, shall join,
 And bloom in peace for a' that.
 Stout Russia's Hemp, so surely
 twined
 Around our wreath we'll draw
 that,
 And he that would the cord unbind,
 Shall have it for his gra-vat!

Or, if to choke sae puir a sot,
 Your pity scorn to thraw that,
 The Devil's elbo' be his lot,
 Where he may sit and claw that.
 In spite of slight, in spite of might,
 In spite of brags and a' that,
 The lads that battled for the right,
 Have won the day and a' that!

There's ae bit spot I had forgot,
 America they ca' that!
 A coward plot her rats had got
 Their father's flag to gnaw that:
 Now see it fly top-gallant high,
 Atlantic winds shall blaw that,
 And Yankee loon, beware your
 croun,

There's kames in hand to claw
 that!
 For on the land, or on the sea,
 Where'er the breezes blaw that,

The British Flag shall bear the grie.
 And win the day for a' that!

FAREWELL TO MACKENZIE

HIGH CHIEF OF KINTAIL

FROM THE GAELIC

FAREWELL to Mackenneth, great
 Earl of the North,
 The Lord of Lochcarron, Glenshiel,
 and Seaforth;
 To the Chieftain this morning his
 course who began,
 Launching forth on the billows his
 bark like a swan.
 For a far foreign land he has
 hoisted his sail,
 Farewell to Mackenzie, High Chief
 of Kintail!

O, swift be the galley and hardy
 her crew,
 May her captain be skilful, her
 mariners true,
 In danger undaunted, unwearied
 by toil,
 Though the whirlwind should rise
 and the ocean should boil:
 On the brave vessel's gunnel I
 drank his bonail,
 And farewell to Mackenzie, High
 Chief of Kintail!

Awake in thy chamber, thou sweet
 southland gale!
 Like the sighs of his people, breathe
 soft on his sail;
 Be prolonged as regret that his
 vassals must know,
 Be fair as their faith and sincere
 as their woe:
 Be so soft and so fair and so faith-
 ful, sweet gale,
 Wafting onward Mackenzie, High
 Chief of Kintail!

Be his pilot experienced and trusty
 and wise,
 To measure the seas and to study
 the skies:

May he hoist all his canvas from
streamer to deck,
But O! crowd it higher when waft-
ing him back —
Till the cliffs of Skooroora and
Conan's glad vale
Shall welcome Mackenzie, High
Chief of Kintail!

IMITATION

OF THE PRECEDING SONG

So sung the old bard in the grief
of his heart
When he saw his loved lord from
his people depart.
Now mute on thy mountains, O
Albyn, are heard
Nor the voice of the song nor the
harp of the bard;
Or its strings are but waked by the
stern winter gale,
As they mourn for Mackenzie, last
Chief of Kintail.

From the far Southland Border a
minstrel came forth,
And he waited the hour that some
bard of the north
His hand on the harp of the ancient
should cast,
And bid its wild numbers mix high
with the blast
But no bard was there left in the
land of the Gael
To lament for Mackenzie, last
Chief of Kintail.

'And shalt thou then sleep,' did
the minstrel exclaim,
'Like the son of the lowly, un-
noticed by fame?
No, son of Fitzgerald! in accents
of woe
The song thou hast loved o'er thy
coffin shall flow,
And teach thy wild mountains to
join in the wail
That laments for Mackenzie, last
Chief of Kintail.

'In vain, the bright course of thy
talents to wrong,
Fate deadened thine ear and im-
prisoned thy tongue;
For brighter o'er all her obstruc-
tions arose
The glow of the genius they could
not oppose;
And who in the land of the Saxon
or Gael
Might match with Mackenzie,
High Chief of Kintail?

'Thy sons rose around thee in
light and in love,
All a father could hope, all a friend
could approve;
What 'vails it the tale of thy sor-
rows to tell, —
In the spring-time of youth and of
promise they fell!
Of the line of Fitzgerald remains
not a male
To bear the proud name of the
Chief of Kintail.

'And thou, gentle dame, who must
bear to thy grief
For thy clan and thy country the
cares of a chief,
Whom brief rolling moons in six
changes have left,
Of thy husband and father and bre-
thren bereft,
To thine ear of affection how sad
is the hail
That salutes thee the heir of the
line of Kintail!'

WAR-SONG OF LACHLAN

HIGH CHIEF OF MACLEAN

FROM THE GAELIC

A WEARY month has wandered
o'er
Since last we parted on the shore;
Heaven! that I saw thee, love,
once more,

Safe on that shore again! —
'T was valiant Lachlan gave the
word:

Lachlan, of many a galley lord:
He called his kindred bands on
board,
And launched them on the
main.

Clan-Gillian is to ocean gone,
Clan-Gillian, fierce in foray known;
Rejoicing in the glory won
In many a bloody broil:
For wide is heard the thundering
fray,
The rout, the ruin, the dismay,
When from the twilight glens away
Clan-Gillian drives the spoil.

Woe to the hills that shall rebound
Our bannered bag-pipes' madden-
ing sound!
Clan-Gillian's onset echoing round,
Shall shake their inmost cell.
Woe to the bark whose crew shall
gaze
Where Lachlan's silken streamer
plays!
The fools might face the lightning's
blaze
As wisely and as well!

SAINT CLOUD

SOFT spread the southern summer
night
Her veil of darksome blue;
Ten thousand stars combined to
light
The terrace of Saint Cloud.

The evening breezes gently sighed,
Like breath of lover true,
Bewailing the deserted pride
And wreck of sweet Saint Cloud.

The drum's deep roll was heard
afar,
The bugle wildly blew

Good-night to Hulan and Hussar
That garrison Saint Cloud.

The startled Naiads from the
shade
With broken urns withdrew,
And silenced was that proud cas-
cade,
The glory of Saint Cloud.

We sate upon its steps of stone,
Nor could its silence rue,
When waked to music of our own
The echoes of Saint Cloud.

Slow Seine might hear each lovely
note
Fall light as summer dew,
While through the moonless air
they float,
Prolonged from fair Saint Cloud.

And sure a melody more sweet
His waters never knew,
Though music's self was wont to
meet
With princes at Saint Cloud.

Nor then with more delighted ear
The circle round her drew
Than ours, when gathered round
to hear
Our songstress at Saint Cloud.

Few happy hours poor mortals
pass, —
Then give those hours their due,
And rank among the foremost
class
Our evenings at Saint Cloud.

THE DANCE OF DEATH

NIGHT and morning were at meet-
ing
Over Waterloo;
Cocks had sung their earliest greet-
ing;
Faint and low they crew,
For no paly beam yet shone

On the heights of Mount Saint
John;

Tempest - clouds prolonged the
sway

Of timeless darkness over day;
Whirlwind, thunder - clap, and
shower

Marked it a predestined hour. 10
Broad and frequent through the
night

Flashed the sheets of levin-light;
Muskets, glancing lightnings back,
Showed the dreary bivouac

Where the soldier lay,
Chill and stiff and drenched with
rain,

Wishing dawn of morn again,
Though death should come with
day.

'Tis at such a tide and hour
Wizard, witch, and fiend have
power, 20

And ghastly forms through mist
and shower

Gleam on the gifted ken;
And then the affrighted prophet's
ear

Drinks whispers strange of fate
and fear,

Presaging death and ruin near
Among the sons of men; —

Apart from Albyn's war-array,
'T was then gray Allan sleepless
lay;

Gray Allan, who for many a day
Had followed stout and stern, 30

Where, through battle's rout and
reel,

Storm of shot and edge of steel,
Led the grandson of Lochiel,

Valiant Fassiefern.
Through steel and shot he leads

no more,
Low laid mid friends' and foe-
men's gore —

But long his native lake's wild
shore,

And Sunart rough, and high Ard-
gower,

And Morven long shall tell,

And proud Bennevis hear with
awe, 40

How upon bloody Quatre-Bras
Brave Cameron heard the wild

hurra
Of conquest as he fell.

Lone on the outskirts of the host,
The weary sentinel held post,
And heard through darkness far
aloof

The frequent clang of courser's
hoof,

Where held the cloaked patrol
their course

And spurred 'gainst storm the
swerving horse;

But there are sounds in Allan's
ear 50

Patrol nor sentinel may hear,
And sights before his eye aghast
Invisible to them have passed,

When down the destined plain,
'Twixt Britain and the bands of
France,

Wild as marsh - borne meteor's
glance,

Strange phantoms wheeled a revel
dance

And doomed the future slain.
Such forms were seen, such sounds
were heard,

When Scotland's James his march
prepared 60

For Flodden's fatal plain;
Such, when he drew his ruthless
sword,

As Choosers of the slain, adored
The yet unchristened Dane.

An indistinct and phantom band,
They wheeled their ring-dance

hand in hand
With gestures wild and dread;

The Seer, who watched them ride
the storm,

Saw through their faint and
shadowy form 69

The lightning's flash more red;
And still their ghastly roundelay
Was of the coming battle-fray

And of the destined dead.

SONG

Wheel the wild dance
While lightnings glance
And thunders rattle loud,
And call the brave
To bloody grave,
To sleep without a shroud.

Our airy feet, 80
So light and fleet,
They do not bend the rye
That sinks its head when whirl-
winds rave,
And swells again in eddying
wave
As each wild gust blows by;
But still the corn
At dawn of morn
Our fatal steps that bore,
At eve lies waste,
A trampled paste 90
Of blackening mud and gore.

Wheel the wild dance
While lightnings glance
And thunders rattle loud,
And call the brave
To bloody grave,
To sleep without a shroud.

Wheel the wild dance!
Brave sons of France, 99
For you our ring makes room;
Make space full wide
For martial pride,
For banner, spear, and plume.
Approach, draw near,
Proud cuirassier!
Room for the men of steel!
Through crest and plate
The broadsword's weight
Both head and heart shall feel.

Wheel the wild dance 110
While lightnings glance
And thunders rattle loud,
And call the brave
To bloody grave,
To sleep without a shroud.

Sons of the spear!
You feel us near
In many a ghastly dream;
With fancy's eye
Our forms you spy, 120
And hear our fatal scream.
With clearer sight
Ere falls the night,
Just when to weal or woe
Your disembodied souls take
flight
On trembling wing—each startled
sprite
Our choir of death shall know.

Wheel the wild dance
While lightnings glance
And thunders rattle loud, 130
And call the brave
To bloody grave,
To sleep without a shroud.

Burst, ye clouds, in tempest
showers,
Redder rain shall soon be ours—
See the east grows wan—
Yield we place to sterner game,
Ere deadlier bolts and direr
flame
Shall the welkin's thunders
shame;
Elemental rage is tame 140
To the wrath of man.

At morn, gray Allan's mates with
awe
Heard of the visioned sights he
saw,
The legend heard him say;
But the Seer's gifted eye was
dim,
Deafened his ear and stark his
limb,
Ere closed that bloody day—
He sleeps far from his Highland
heath,—
But often of the Dance of Death
His comrades tell the tale, 150
On picquet-post when ebbs the
night,

And waning watch-fires glow less
bright,
And dawn is glimmering pale.

ROMANCE OF DUNOIS

FROM THE FRENCH

It was Dunois, the young and
brave, was bound for Pales-
tine,
But first he made his orisons be-
fore Saint Mary's shrine :
'And grant, immortal Queen of
Heaven,' was still the sol-
dier's prayer,
'That I may prove the bravest
knight and love the fairest
fair.'

His oath of honor on the shrine he
graved it with his sword,
And followed to the Holy Land the
banner of his Lord ;
Where, faithful to his noble vow,
his war-cry filled the air,
'Be honored aye the bravest
knight, beloved the fairest
fair.'

They owed the conquest to his
arm, and then his liege-lord
said,
'The heart that has for honor
beat by bliss must be repaid.
My daughter Isabel and thou shall
be a wedded pair,
For thou art bravest of the brave,
she fairest of the fair.'

And then they bound the holy
knot before Saint Mary's
shrine
That makes a paradise on earth,
if hearts and hands combine ;
And every lord and lady bright
that were in chapel there
Cried, 'Honored be the bravest
knight, beloved the fairest
fair!'

THE TROUBADOUR

FROM THE FRENCH

GLOWING with love, on fire for
fame,
A Troubadour that hated sor-
row
Beneath his lady's window came,
And thus he sung his last good-
morrow :
'My arm it is my country's right,
My heart is in my true-love's
bower ;
Gayly for love and fame to fight
Befits the gallant Troubadour.'

And while he marched with helm
on head
And harp in hand, the descant
rung,
As, faithful to his favorite maid,
The minstrel-burden still he
sung :
'My arm it is my country's right,
My heart is in my lady's bower ;
Resolved for love and fame to
fight,
I come, a gallant Troubadour.'

Even when the battle-roar was
deep,
With dauntless heart he hewed
his way,
Mid splintering lance and falchion-
sweep,
And still was heard his warrior-
lay :
'My life it is my country's right,
My heart is in my lady's bower ;
For love to die, for fame to fight,
Becomes the gallant Trouba-
dour.'

Alas ! upon the bloody field
He fell beneath the foeman's
glave,
But still reclining on his shield,
Expiring sung the exulting
stave :
'My life it is my country's right,

My heart is in my lady's bower;
For love and fame to fall in fight
Becomes the valiant Trouba-
dour.'

FROM THE FRENCH

It chanced that Cupid on a sea-
son,

By Fancy urged, resolved to wed,
But could not settle whether Rea-
son

Or Folly should partake his bed.

What does he then?—Upon my
life,

'T was bad example for a deity —
He takes me Reason for a wife,
And Folly for his hours of gay-
ety.

Though thus he dealt in petty trea-
son,

He loved them both in equal
measure;

Fidelity was born of Reason,
And Folly brought to bed of
Pleasure.

SONG

ON THE LIFTING OF THE BAN-
NER OF THE HOUSE OF BUC-
CLEUCH AT A GREAT FOOT-
BALL MATCH ON CARTER-
HAUGH

FROM the brown crest of Newark
its summons extending,
Our signal is waving in smoke
and in flame;

And each forester blithe, from his
mountain descending,
Bounds light o'er the heather to
join in the game.

Then up with the Banner, let
forest winds fan her,
She has blazed over Ettrick
eight ages and more;

In sports we'll attend her, in
battle defend her,
With heart and with hand,
like our fathers before.

When the Southern invader spread
waste and disorder,

At the glance of her crescents
he paused and withdrew,

For around them were marshalled
the pride of the Border,

The Flowers of the Forest, the
Bands of BUCCLEUCH.

A stripling's weak hand to our
revel has borne her,

No mail-glove has grasped her,
no spearmen surround;

But ere a bold foeman should
scathe or should scorn her

A thousand true hearts would
be cold on the ground.

We forget each contention of civil
dissension,

And hail, like our brethren,
HOME, DOUGLAS, and CAR:

And ELLIOT and PRINGLE in pas-
time shall mingle,

As welcome in peace as their
fathers in war.

Then strip, lads, and to it, though
sharp be the weather,

And if by mischance you should
happen to fall,

There are worse things in life than
a tumble on heather,

And life is itself but a game at
foot-ball.

And when it is over we'll drink a
blithe measure

To each laird and each lady that
witnessed our fun,

And to every blithe heart that took
part in our pleasure,

To the lads that have lost and
the lads that have won.

May the Forest still flourish, both
Borough and Landward,

From the hall of the peer to the
herd's ingle-nook;
And huzza! my brave hearts, for
BUCCLEUCH and his stand-
ard,

For the King and the Country,
the Clan and the Duke!

Then up with the Banner, let
forest winds fan her,
She has blazed over Ettrick
eight ages and more;

In sport we'll attend her, in
battle defend her,

With heart and with hand,
like our fathers before.

SONGS FROM GUY MANNER- ING

Published in 1815

I

'CANNY MOMENT, LUCKY FIT'

From chapter iii.

CANNY moment, lucky fit;
Is the lady lighter yet?
Be it lad, or be it lass,
Sign wi' cross, and sain wi' mass.

Trefoil, vervain, John's-wort, dill,
Hinders witches of their will;
Weel is them, that weel may
Fast upon St. Andrew's day.

Saint Bride and her brat,
Saint Colme and her cat,
Saint Michael and his spear,
Keep the house frae reif and wear.

II

'TWIST YE, TWINE YE! EVEN SO'

From chapter iv.

TWIST ye, twine ye! even so,
Mingle shades of joy and woe,

Hope and fear and peace and
strife,
In the thread of human life.

While the mystic twist is spinning,
And the infant's life beginning,
Dimly seen through twilight bend-
ing,
Lo, what varied shapes attending!

Passions wild and follies vain,
Pleasures soon exchanged for
pain;
Doubt and jealousy and fear,
In the magic dance appear.

Now they wax and now they
dwindle,
Whirling with the whirling spindle,
Twist ye, twine ye! even so,
Mingle human bliss and woe.

III

'WASTED, WEARY, WHEREFORE
STAY'

From chapter xxvii.

WASTED, weary, wherefore stay,
Wrestling thus with earth and
clay?

From the body pass away;—
Hark! the mass is singing.

From thee doff thy mortal weed,
Mary Mother be thy speed,
Saints to help thee at thy need;—
Hark! the knell is ringing.

Fear not snow-drift drifting fast,
Sleet or hail or levin blast;
Soon the shroud shall lap thee fast,
And the sleep be on thee cast
That shall ne'er know waking.

Haste thee, haste thee, to be gone,
Earth flits fast, and time draws
on,—

Gasp thy gasp, and groan thy
groan,
Day is near the breaking.

IV

'DARK SHALL BE LIGHT'

From chapter xlix.

DARK shall be light,
And wrong done to right,
When Bertram's right and Ber-
tram's might
Shall meet on Ellangowan's height.

LULLABY OF AN INFANT
CHIEF

AIR — '*Cadul gu lo*'

O, HUSH thee, my babie, thy sire
was a knight,
Thy mother a lady both lovely and
bright;
The woods and the glens, from the
towers which we see,
They all are belonging, dear babie,
to thee.
O ho ro, i ri ri, cadul gu lo,
O ho ro, i ri ri, etc.

O, fear not the bugle, though loudly
it blows,
It calls but the warders that guard
thy repose;
Their bows would be bended, their
blades would be red,
Ere the step of a foeman draws
near to thy bed.
O ho ro, i ri ri, etc.

O, hush thee, my babie, the time
soon will come,
When thy sleep shall be broken
by trumpet and drum;
Then hush thee, my darling, take
rest while you may,
For strife comes with manhood
and waking with day.
O ho ro, i ri ri, etc.

THE RETURN TO ULSTER

ONCE again,— but how changed
since my wanderings be-
gan —

I have heard the deep voice of the
Lagan and Bann,
And the pines of Clanbrassil re-
sound to the roar
That wearies the echoes of fair
Tullamore.

Alas! my poor bosom, and why
shouldst thou burn!

With the scenes of my youth can
its raptures return?

Can I live the dear life of delusion
again,

That flowed when these echoes
first mixed with my strain?

It was then that around me,
though poor and unknown,
High spells of mysterious enchant-
ment were thrown;

The streams were of silver, of dia-
mond the dew,

The land was an Eden, for fancy
was new.

I had heard of our bards, and my
soul was on fire

At the rush of their verse and the
sweep of their lyre:

To me 't was not legend nor tale
to the ear,

But a vision of noontide, distin-
guished and clear.

Ultonia's old heroes awoke at the
call,

And renewed the wild pomp of
the chase and the hall;

And the standard of Fion flashed
fierce from on high,

Like a burst of the sun when the
tempest is nigh.

It seemed that the harp of green
Erin once more

Could renew all the glories she
boasted of yore. —

Yet why at remembrance, fond
heart, shouldst thou burn?

They were days of delusion and
cannot return.

But was she, too, a phantom, the
maid who stood by,
And listed my lay while she turned
from mine eye?

Was she, too, a vision, just glancing
to view,

Then dispersed in the sunbeam or
melted to dew?

O, would it had been so!—O,
would that her eye

Had been but a star-glance that
shot through the sky,

And her voice that was moulded
to melody's thrill,

Had been but a zephyr that sighed
and was still!

O, would it had been so!—not
then this poor heart

Had learned the sad lesson, to
love and to part;

To bear unassisted its burden of
care,

While I toiled for the wealth I had
no one to share.

Not then had I said, when life's
summer was done

And the hours of her autumn were
fast speeding on,

'Take the fame and the riches ye
brought in your train,

And restore me the dream of my
springtide again.'

JOCK OF HAZELDEAN

AIR—'A Border Melody'

'WHY weep ye by the tide, ladie?
Why weep ye by the tide?

I'll wed ye to my youngest son,
And ye sall be his bride:

And ye sall be his bride, ladie,
Sae comely to be seen'—

But aye she loot the tears down
fa'

For Jock of Hazeldean.

'Now let this wilfu' grief be done,
And dry that cheek so pale;
Young Frank is chief of Errington
And lord of Langley-dale;
His step is first in peaceful ha',
His sword in battle keen'—
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazeldean.

'A chain of gold ye sall not lack,
Nor braid to bind your hair;
Nor mettled hound, nor managed
hawk,
Nor palfrey fresh and fair;
And you, the foremost o' them a',
Shall ride our forest queen'—
But aye she loot the tears down fa'
For Jock of Hazeldean.

The kirk was decked at morning-
tide,

The tapers glimmered fair;
The priest and bridegroom wait
the bride,

And dame and knight are there.
They sought her baith by bower
and ha';

The ladie was not seen!
She's o'er the Border and awa'
Wi' Jock of Hazeldean.

PIBROCH OF DONALD DHU

AIR—'Piobair of Donuil Dhuidh'

PIBROCH of Donuil Dhu,
Pibroch of Donuil,
Wake thy wild voice anew,
Summon Clan Conuil.
Come away, come away,
Hark to the summons!
Come in your war array,
Gentles and commons.

Come from deep glen and
From mountain so rocky,
The war-pipe and pennon
Are at Inverlochy.
Come every hill-plaid and
True heart that wears one,

Come every steel blade and
Strong hand that bears one.

Leave untended the herd,
The flock without shelter;
Leave the corpse uninterred,
The bride at the altar;
Leave the deer, leave the steer,
Leave nets and barges:
Come with your fighting gear,
Broadsword and targes.

Come as the winds come when
Forests are rended;
Come as the waves come when
Navies are stranded:
Faster come, faster come,
Faster and faster,
Chief, vassal, page and groom,
Tenant and master.

Fast they come, fast they come;
See how they gather!
Wide waves the eagle plume,
Blended with heather.
Cast your plaids, draw your blades,
Forward each man set!
Pibroch of Donuil Dhu,
Knell for the onset!

NORA'S VOW

AIR — '*Cha teid mis a chaoidh*'

HEAR what Highland Nora said,
'The Earlie's son I will not wed,
Should all the race of nature die
And none be left but he and I.
For all the gold, for all the gear,
And all the lands both far and
near,
That ever valor lost or won,
I would not wed the Earlie's son.'

'A maiden's vows,' old Callum
spoke,
'Are lightly made and lightly
broke;
The heather on the mountain's
height

Begins to bloom in purple light;
The frost-wind soon shall sweep
away
That lustre deep from glen and
brae;
Yet Nora ere its bloom be gone
May blithely wed the Earlie's
son.'

'The swan,' she said, 'the lake's
clear breast
May barter for the eagle's nest;
The Awe's fierce stream may
backward turn,
Ben-Cruaichan fall and crush Kil-
churn;
Our kilted clans when blood is
high
Before their foes may turn and
fly;
But I, were all these marvels done,
Would never wed the Earlie's
son.'

Still in the water-lily's shade
Her wonted nest the wild-swan
made;
Ben-Cruaichan stands as fast as
ever,
Still downward foams the Awe's
fierce river;
To shun the clash of foeman's
steel
No Highland brogue has turned
the heel;
But Nora's heart is lost and
won —
She's wedded to the Earlie's son!

MACGREGOR'S GATHERING

AIR — '*Thain' a Grigalach*'

THE moon's on the lake and the
mist's on the brae,
And the Clan has a name that is
nameless by day;
Then gather, gather, gather,
Grigalach!
Gather, gather, gather, etc.

Our signal for fight, that from
monarchs we drew,
Must be heard but by night in our
vengeful haloo!

Then haloo, Grigalach! haloo,
Grigalach!

Haloo, haloo, haloo, Grigalach,
etc.

Glen Orchy's proud mountains,
Coalchurn and her towers,
Glenstrae and Glenlyon no longer
are ours;

We're landless, landless, land-
less, Grigalach!

Landless, landless, landless,
etc.

But doomed and devoted by vassal
and lord,

MacGregor has still both his heart
and his sword!

Then courage, courage, cour-
age, Grigalach!

Courage, courage, courage, etc.

If they rob us of name and pursue
us with beagles,

Give their roofs to the flame and
their flesh to the eagles!

Then vengeance, vengeance,
vengeance, Grigalach!

Vengeance, vengeance, ven-
geance, etc.

While there 's leaves in the forest
and foam on the river,

MacGregor, despite them, shall
flourish forever!

Come then, Grigalach, come
then, Grigalach!

Cóme then, come then, come
then, etc.

Through the depths of Loch Ka-
trine the steed shall career,

O'er the peak of Ben-Lomond the
galley shall steer,

And the rocks of Craig-Royston
like icicles melt,

Ere our wrongs be forgot or our
vengeance unfelt.

Then gather, gather, gather,
Grigalach!

Gather, gather, gather, etc.

VERSES

COMPOSED FOR THE OCCASION,
ADAPTED TO HAYDN'S AIR
'GOD SAVE THE EMPEROR
FRANCIS,' AND SUNG BY A SE-
LECT BAND AFTER THE DIN-
NER GIVEN BY THE LORD PRO-
VOST OF EDINBURGH TO THE
GRANDDUKE NICHOLAS OF
RUSSIA, AND HIS SUITE, 19TH
DECEMBER, 1816

GOD protect brave ALEXANDER,
Heaven defend the noble Czar,
Mighty Russia's high Commander,
First in Europe's banded war;
For the realms he did deliver
From the tyrant overthrown,
Thou, of every good the Giver,
Grant him long to bless his own!
Bless him, mid his land's disas-
ter

For her rights who battled brave;
Of the land of foemen master,
Bless him who their wrongs for-
gave.

O'er his just resentment victor,
Victor over Europe's foes,
Late and long supreme director,
Grant in peace his reign may
close.

Hail! then, hail! illustrious stran-
ger!

Welcome to our mountain strand
Mutual interests, hopes, and dan-
ger.

Link us with thy native land.
Freemen's force or false beguiling
Shall that union ne'er divide,
Hand in hand while peace is smil-
ing,

And in battle side by side.

VERSES FROM THE ANTI-
QUARY

Published in 1816

I

'HE CAME, BUT VALOR HAD SO
FIRED HIS EYE'

From chapter vi.

HE came — but valor had so fired
his eye,
And such a falchion glittered on
his thigh,
That, by the gods, with such a load
of steel,
I thought he came to murder —
not to heal.

II

'WHY SIT'ST THOU BY THAT
RUINED HALL'

From chapter x.

'WHY sit'st thou by that ruined
hall,
Thou aged carle so stern and
gray?
Dost thou its former pride recall,
Or ponder how it passed
away?' —

'Know'st thou not me?' the Deep
Voice cried;
'So long enjoyed, so oft mis-
used —

Alternate, in thy fickle pride,
Desired, neglected, and accused!

'Before my breath, like blazing
flax,
Man and his marvels pass away!
And changing empires wane and
wax,
Are founded, flourish, and decay.

'Redeem mine hours — the space
is brief —

While in my glass the sand-
grains shiver,
And measureless thy joy or grief,
When Time and thou shalt part
forever!

III

EPITAPH

From chapter xi.

HEIR lyeth John o' ye Girnell,
Erth has ye nit and heuen ye
kinnell.
In hys tyne ilk wyfe's hennis
clockit,
Ilka gud mannis herth wi' bairnis
was stokit,
He deled a boll o' bear in firloittis
fyve,
Four for ye halie kirke and ane
for puir mennis wyvis.

IV

'THE HERRING LOVES THE
MERRY MOON-LIGHT'

From chapter xi.

THE herring loves the merry
moon-light,
The mackerel loves the wind,
But the oyster loves the dredging
sang,
For they come of a gentle kind.

Now haud your tongue, baith wife
and carle,
And listen great and sma',
And I will sing of Glenallan's
Earl
That fought on the red Harlaw.

The cronach 's cried on Bennachie
And down the Don and a',
And hieland and lawland may
mournfu' be
For the sair field of Harlaw. —

They saddled a hundred milk-
white steeds,
They hae bridled a hundred
black,
With a chafron of steel on each
horse's head,
And a good knight upon his
back.

They hadna ridden a mile, a mile,
A mile but barely ten,
When Donald came branking down
the brae
Wi' twenty thousand men.

Their tartans they were waving
wide,
Their glaives were glancing
clear,
The pibrochs rung frae side to
side,
Would deafen ye to hear.

The great Earl in his stirrups
stood,
That Highland host to see:
'Now here a knight that's stout
and good
May prove a jeopardie;

'What would'st thou do, my squire
so gay,
That rides beside my reyne,—
Were ye Glenallan's Earl the day,
And I were Roland Cheyne?

'To turn the rein were sin and
shame,
To fight were wond'rous peril,—
What would ye do now, Roland
Cheyne,
Were ye Glenallan's Earl?'—

'Were I Glenallan's Earl this tide,
And ye were Roland Cheyne,
The spur should be in my horse's
side,
And the bridle upon his mane.

'If they hae twenty thousand
blades,
And we twice ten times ten,

Yet they hae but their tartan
plaids,
And we are mail-clad men.

'My horse shall ride through
ranks sae rude,
As through the moorland fern,—
Then ne'er let the gentle Norman
blude
Grow cauld for Highland kerne.'

He turned him right and round
again,
Said, 'Scorn na at my mither;
Light loves I may get a mony a
ane,
But minnie ne'er anither.'

THE SEARCH AFTER HAP- PINESS

OR, THE QUEST OF SULTAUN
SOLIMAUN

O, FOR a glance of that gay
Muse's eye
That lightened on Bandello's
laughing tale,
And twinkled with a lustre
shrewd and sly
When Giam Battista bade her
vision hail!—
Yet fear not, ladies, the *naïve*
detail
Given by the natives of that land
canorous;
Italian license loves to leap the
pale,
We Britons have the fear of
shame before us,
And, if not wise in mirth, at least
must be decorous.

In the far eastern clime, no great
while since,
Lived Sultaun Solimaun, a mighty
prince,
Whose eyes, as oft as they per-
formed their round,
Beheld all others fixed upon the
ground;

Whose ears received the same un-
varied phrase,
'Sultaun! thy vassal hears and
he obeys!'

All have their tastes — this may
the fancy strike

Of such grave folks as pomp and
grandeur like;

For me, I love the honest heart
and warm

Of monarch who can amble round
his farm,

Or, when the toil of state no more
annoys, ²⁰

In chimney corner seek domestic
joys —

I love a prince will bid the bottle
pass,

Exchanging with his subjects
glance and glass;

In fitting time can, gayest of the
gay,

Keep up the jest and mingle in the
lay —

Such monarchs best our free-born
humors suit,

But despots must be stately, stern,
and mute.

This Solimaun Serendib had in
sway —

And where 's Serendib? may some
critic say. —

Good lack, mine honest friend,
consult the chart, ³⁰

Scare not my Pegasus before I
start!

If Rennell has it not, you 'll find
mayhap

The isle laid down in Captain
Sindbad's map —

Famed mariner, whose merciless
narrations

Drove every friend and kinsman
out of patience,

Till, fain to find a guest who
thought them shorter,

He deigned to tell them over to a
porter —

The last edition see, by Long and
Co.,

Rees, Hurst, and Orme, our fathers
in the Row.

Serendib found, deem not my tale
a fiction — ⁴⁰

This Sultaun, whether lacking
contradiction —

A sort of stimulant which hath its
uses

To raise the spirits and reform the
juices,

Sovereign specific for all sorts of
cures

In my wife's practice and perhaps
in yours —

The Sultaun lacking this same
wholesome bitter,

Or cordial smooth for prince's pal-
ate fitter —

Or if some Mollah had hag-rid his
dreams

With Degial, Ginnistan, and such
wild themes

Belonging to the Mollah's subtle
craft, ⁵⁰

I wot not — but the Sultaun never
laughed,

Scarce ate or drank, and took a
melancholy

That scorned all remedy profane
or holy;

In his long list of melancholies,
mad

Or mazed or dumb, hath Burton
none so bad.

Physicians soon arrived, sage,
ware, and tried,

As e'er scrawled jargon in a
darkened room;

With heedful glance the Sultaun's
tongue they eyed,

Peeped in his bath and God knows
where beside,

And then in solemn accent spoke
their doom, ⁶⁰

'His majesty is very far from
well.'

Then each to work with his
specific fell:

The Hakim Ibrahim *instant*
 brought
 His unguent Mahazzim al Zer-
 dukkaut,
 While Roompot, a practitioner
 more wily,
 Relied on his Munaskif al fillfly.
 More and yet more in deep array
 appear,
 And some the front assail and
 some the rear;
 Their remedies to reinforce and
 vary
 Came surgeon eke, and eke apoth-
 ecary; 70
 Till the tired monarch, though of
 words grown chary,
 Yet dropt, to recompense their
 fruitless labor,
 Some hint about a bowstring or a
 sabre.
 There lacked, I promise you, no
 longer speeches
 To rid the palace of those learned
 leeches.
 Then was the council called — by
 their advice —
 They deemed the matter ticklish
 all and nice,
 And sought to shift it off from
 their own shoulders —
 Tartars and couriers in all speed
 were sent,
 To call a sort of Eastern Parlia-
 ment 80
 Of feudatory chieftains and free-
 holders —
 Such have the Persians at this
 very day,
 My gallant Malcolm calls them
couroultai; —
 I'm not prepared to show in this
 slight song
 That to Serendib the same forms
 belong —
 E'en let the learned go search, and
 tell me if I'm wrong.
 The Omrahs, each with hand on
 scimitar,

Gave, like Sempronius, still their
 voice for war —
 'The sabre of the Sultaun in its
 sheath
 Too long has slept nor owned the
 work of death; 90
 Let the Tambourgi bid his signal
 rattle,
 Bang the loud gong and raise the
 shout of battle!
 This dreary cloud that dims our
 sovereign's day
 Shall from his kindled bosom flit
 away,
 When the bold Lootie wheels his
 courser round
 And the armed elephant shall
 shake the ground.
 Each noble pants to own the glori-
 ous summons —
 And for the charges — Lo! your
 faithful Commons!
 The Riots who attended in their
 places —
 Serendib language calls a farmer
 Riot — 100
 Looked ruefully in one another's
 faces,
 From this oration auguring much
 disquiet,
 Double assessment, forage, and
 free quarters;
 And fearing these as Chinamen
 the Tartars,
 Or as the whiskered vermin fear
 the mousers,
 Each fumbled in the pocket of his
 trousers.
 And next came forth the reverend
 Convocation,
 Bald heads, white beards, and
 many a turban green,
 Imaum and Mollah there of every
 station,
 Santon, Fakir, and Calendar
 were seen. 110
 Their votes were various — some
 advised a mosque
 With fitting revenues should be
 erected,

With seemly gardens and with gay
kiosque,
To recreate a band of priests selected;

Others opined that through the
realms a dole

Be made to holy men, whose
prayers might profit

The Sultaun's weal in body and in
soul.

But their long-headed chief, the
Sheik Ul-Sofit,

More closely touched the point; —
'Thy studious mood,'

Quoth he, 'O Prince! hath thickened all thy blood, ¹²⁰

And dulled thy brain with labor
beyond measure;

Wherefore relax a space and take
thy pleasure,

And toy with beauty or tell o'er
thy treasure;

From all the cares of state, my
liege, enlarge thee,

And leave the burden to thy faithful
clergy.'

These counsels sage availed not a
whit,

And so the patient—as is not
uncommon

Where grave physicians lose their
time and wit—

Resolved to take advice of an old
woman;

His mother she, a dame who once
was beauteous, ¹³⁰

And still was called so by each
subject duteous.

Now, whether Fatima was witch
in earnest,

Or only made believe, I cannot
say—

But she professed to cure disease
the sternest,

By dint of magic amulet or lay;

And, when all other skill in vain
was shown,

She deemed it fitting time to use
her own.

'*Sympathia magica* hath wonders
done'—

Thus did old Fatima bespeak her
son—

'It works upon the fibres and the
pores, ¹⁴⁰

And thus insensibly our health restores,

And it must help us here. — Thou
must endure

The ill, my son, or travel for the
cure.

Search land and sea, and get
where'er you can

The inmost vesture of a happy
man,

I mean his SHIRT, my son; which,
taken warm

And fresh from off his back, shall
chase your harm,

Bid every current of your veins
rejoice,

And your dull heart leap light as
shepherd-boy's.'

Such was the counsel from his
mother came; — ¹⁵⁰

I know not if she had some under-
game,

As doctors, have, who bid their
patients roam

And live abroad when sure to die
at home;

Or if she thought that, somehow or
another,

Queen-Regent sounded better than
Queen-Mother;

But, says the Chronicle — who will
go look it—

That such was her advice—the
Sultaun took it.

All are on board — the Sultaun and
his train,

In gilded galley prompt to plough
the main.

The old Rais was the first who
questioned, 'Whither?' ¹⁶⁰

They paused — 'Arabia,' thought
the pensive prince,

'Was called The Happy many ages
since —

For Mokha, Rais.' — And they
came safely thither.
But not in Araby with all her
balm,
Not where Judea weeps beneath
her palm,
Not in rich Egypt, not in Nubian
waste,
Could there the step of happiness
be traced.
One Copt alone professed to have
seen her smile,
When Bruce his goblet filled at
infant Nile:
She blessed the dauntless traveller
as he quaffed, 170
But vanished from him with the
ended draught.

'Enough of turbans,' said the
weary King,
'These dolimans of ours are not
the thing;
Try we the Giaours, these men of
coat and cap, I
Incline to think some of them must
be happy;
At least, they have as fair a cause
as any can,
They drink good wine and keep no
Ramazan.
Then northward, ho!' — The vessel
cuts the sea,
And fair Italia lies upon her lee. —
But fair Italia, she who once un-
furled 180
Her eagle-banners o'er a conquered
world,
Long from her throne of domina-
tion tumbled,
Lay by her quondam vassals sorely
humbled;
The Pope himself looked pensive,
pale, and lean,
And was not half the man he once
had been.
'While these the priest and those
the noble fleeces,
Our poor old boot,' they said, 'is
torn to pieces.
Its tops the vengeful claws of
Austria feel,

And the Great Devil is rending toe
and heel.
If happiness you seek, to tell you
truly, 190
We think she dwells with one
Giovanni Bulli;
A tramontane, a heretic — the
buck,
Poffaredio! still has all the luck;
By land or ocean never strikes his
flag —
And then — a perfect walking
money-bag.'
Off set our prince to seek John
Bull's abode,
But first took France — it lay upon
the road.

Monsieur Baboon after much late
commotion
Was agitated like a settling ocean,
Quite out of sorts and could not
tell what ailed him, 200
Only the glory of his house had
failed him;
Besides, some tumors on his noddle
biding
Gave indication of a recent hiding.
Our prince, though Sultauns of
such things are heedless,
Thought it a thing indelicate and
needless
To ask if at that moment he was
happy.
And Monsieur, seeing that he was
comme il faut, a
Loud voice mustered up, for '*Vive
le Roi!*'
Then whispered, 'Ave you any
news of Nappy?'
The Sultaun answered him with a
cross question, — 210
'Pray, can you tell me aught of
one John Bull,
That dwells somewhere beyond
your herring-pool?'
The query seemed of difficult di-
gestion,
The party shrugged and grinned
and took his snuff,
And found his whole good-breeding
scarce enough.

Twitching his visage into as many
puckers

As damsels wont to put into their
tuckers —

Ere liberal Fashion damned both
lace and lawn,

And bade the veil of modesty be
drawn —

Replied the Frenchman after a
brief pause, 220

‘Jean Bool! — I vas not know him
— Yes, I vas —

I vas remember dat, von year or
two,

I saw him at von place called
Vaterloo —

Ma foi! il s'est très joliment battu,
Dat is for Englishman, — m'enten-

dez-vous?

But den he had wit him one damn
son-gun,

Rogue I no like — dey call him
Vellington.’

Monsieur's politeness could not
hide his fret,

So Solimaun took leave and
crossed the strait.

John Bull was in his very worst of
moods, 230

Raving of sterile farms and unsold
goods;

His sugar-loaves and bales about
he threw,

And on his counter beat the devil's
tattoo.

His wars were ended and the victo-
tory won,

But then 't was reckoning-day with
honest John;

And authors vouch, 't was still this
worthy's way,

‘Never to grumble till he came to
pay;

And then he always thinks, his
temper's such,

The work too little and the pay too
much.’

Yet, grumbler as he is, so kind
and hearty 240

That when his mortal foe was on
the floor,

And past the power to harm his
quiet more,

Poor John had wellnigh wept
for Bonaparte!

Such was the wight whom Soli-
maun salamed, —

‘And who are you,’ John answered,
‘and be d——d?’

‘A stranger, come to see the hap-
piest man —

So, signior, all avouch — in Fran-
gistan.’

‘Happy? my tenants breaking on
my hand;

Unstocked my pastures and un-
tilled my land;

Sugar and rum a drug, and mice
and moths 250

The sole consumers of my good
broadcloths —

Happy? — Why, cursed war and
racking tax

Have left us scarcely raiment to
our backs.’

‘In that case, signior, I may take
my leave;

I came to ask a favor — but I
grieve’ —

‘Favor?’ said John, and eyed the
Sultaun hard,

‘It's my belief you came to break
the yard! —

But, stay, you look like some poor
foreign sinner —

Take that to buy yourself a shirt
and dinner.’

With that he chucked a guinea at
his head; 260

But with due dignity the Sultaun
said,

‘Permit me, sir, your bounty to
decline;

A *shirt* indeed I seek, but none of
thine.

Signior, I kiss your hands, so fare
you well.’

‘Kiss and be d——d,’ quoth John,
‘and go to hell!’

Next door to John there dwelt his
sister Peg,
Once a wild lass as ever shook a
leg
When the blithe bagpipe blew —
but, soberer now,
She *doucely* span her flax and
milked her cow.
And whereas erst she was a needy
slattern, 270

Nor now of wealth or cleanliness
a pattern,
Yet once a month her house was
partly swept,
And once a week a plenteous board
she kept.
And whereas, eke, the vixen used
her claws

And teeth of yore on slender
provocation,
She now was grown amenable to
laws,

A quiet soul as any in the na-
tion;
The sole remembrance of her war-
like joys

Was in old songs she sang to
please her boys.

John Bull, whom in their years of
early strife 280

She wont to lead a cat-and-doggish
life,

Now found the woman, as he said,
a neighbor,

Who looked to the main chance,
declined no labor,

Loved a long grace and spoke a
northern jargon,

And was d—d close in making
of a bargain.

The Sultaun entered, and he made
his leg,

And with decorum curtsied sister
Peg—

She loved a book, and knew a thing
or two,

And guessed at once with whom
she had to do.

She bade him 'Sit into the fire,'
and took 290

Her dram, her cake, her kebbuck
from the nook;

Asked him 'about the news from
Eastern parts:

And of her absent bairns, puir
Highland hearts!

If peace brought down the price
of tea and pepper,

And if the *nitmugs* were grown
ony cheaper;—

Were there nae *speerings* of our
Mungo Park—

Ye'll be the gentleman that wants
the sark?

If ye wad buy a web o' auld wife's
spinning,

I'll warrant ye it's a weel-wear-
ing linen.'

Then up got Peg and round the
house 'gan scuttle 300

In search of goods her customer
to nail,

Until the Sultaun strained his
princely throttle,

And holloed, 'Ma'am, that is
not what I ail.

Pray, are you happy, ma'am, in this
snug glen?'

'Happy?' said Peg; 'What for
d'ye want to ken?

Besides, just think upon this by-
gane year,

Grain wadna pay the yoking of
the pleugh.'

'What say you to the present?'—
'Meal's sae dear,

To make their *brose* my bairns
have scarce aneugh.'

'The devil take the shirt,' said
Solimaun, 310

'I think my quest will end as it
began.—

Farewell, ma'am; nay, no cere-
mony, I beg'—

'Ye'll no be for the linen then?'
said Peg.

Now, for the land of verdant Erin
The Sultaun's royal bark is steer-
ing,

The Emerald Isle where honest
Paddy dwells,
The cousin of John Bull, as story
tells.
For a long space had John, with
words of thunder,
Hard looks, and harder knocks,
kept Paddy under,
Till the poor lad, like boy that's
flogged unduly, 320
Had gotten somewhat restive and
unruly.
Hard was his lot and lodging,
you'll allow,
A wigwam that would hardly serve
a sow;
His landlord, and of middle-men
two brace,
Had screwed his rent up to the
starving-place;
His garment was a top-coat and
an old one,
His meal was a potato, and a cold
one;
But still for fun or frolic and all
that,
In the round world was not the
match of Pat.

The Sultaun saw him on a holi-
day, 330
Which is with Paddy still a jolly
day:
When mass is ended, and his load
of sins
Confessed, and Mother Church
hath from her binus
Dealt forth a bonus of imputed
merit,
Then is Pat's time for fancy, whim,
and spirit!
To jest, to sing, to caper fair and
free,
And dance as light as leaf upon
the tree.
'By Mahomet,' said Sultaun Soli-
maun,
'That ragged fellow is our very
man!
Rush in and seize him — do not do
him hurt, 340

But, will he nill he, let me have
his *shirt*.'

Shilela their plan was wellnigh
after balking —
Much less provocation will set it
a-walking —
But the odds that foiled Hercules
foiled Paddy Whack;
They seized, and they floored, and
they stripped him — Alack!
Up-bubboo! Paddy had not — a
shirt to his back!
And the king, disappointed, with
sorrow and shame
Went back to Serendib as sad as
he came.

LINES

WRITTEN FOR MISS SMITH

WHEN the lone pilgrim views afar
The shrine that is his guiding star,
With awe his footsteps print the
road
Which the loved saint of yore has
trod.
As near he draws and yet more
near,
His dim eye sparkles with a tear;
The Gothic fane's unwonted show,
The choral hymn, the tapers'
glow,
Oppress his soul; while they de-
light
And chasten rapture with affright.
No longer dare he think his toil
Can merit aught his patron's smile;
Too light appears the distant
way,
The chilly eve, the sultry day —
All these endured no favor claim,
But murmuring forth the sainted
name,
He lays his little offering down,
And only deprecates a frown.

We too who ply the Thespian
art
Oft feel such bodings of the heart,

And when our utmost powers are
 strained
 Dare hardly hope your favor
 gained.
 She who from sister climes has
 sought
 The ancient land where Wallace
 fought —
 Land long renowned for arms and
 arts,
 And conquering eyes and daunt-
 less hearts —
 She, as the flutterings *here* avow,
 Feels all the pilgrim's terrors *now*;
 Yet, sure on Caledonian plain
 The stranger never sued in vain.
 'Tis yours the hospitable task
 To give the applause she dare not
 ask;
 And they who bid the pilgrim
 speed,
 The pilgrim's blessing be their
 need.

MR. KEMBLE'S FAREWELL ADDRESS

ON TAKING LEAVE OF THE EDINBURGH STAGE

As the worn war-horse, at the
 trumpet's sound,
 Erects his mane, and neighs, and
 paws the ground —
 Disdains the ease his generous
 lord assigns,
 And longs to rush on the embat-
 tled lines,
 So I, your plaudits ringing on
 mine ear,
 Can scarce sustain to think our
 parting near;
 To think my scenic hour forever
 past,
 And that those valued plaudits are
 my last.
 Why should we part, while still
 some powers remain,
 That in your service strive not yet
 in vain?

Cannot high zeal the strength of
 youth supply,
 And sense of duty fire the fading
 eye;
 And all the wrongs of age remain
 subdued
 Beneath the burning glow of grati-
 tude?
 Ah, no! the taper, wearing to its
 close,
 Oft for a space in fitful lustre
 glows;
 But all too soon the transient
 gleam is past,
 It cannot be renewed, and will not
 last;
 Even duty, zeal, and gratitude can
 wage
 But short-lived conflict with the
 frosts of age.
 Yes! It were poor, remembering
 what I was,
 To live a pensioner on your ap-
 plause,
 To drain the dregs of your endur-
 ance dry,
 And take, as alms, the praise I
 once could buy;
 Till every sneering youth around
 enquires,
 'Is this the man who once could
 please our sires?'
 And scorn assumes compassion's
 doubtful mien,
 To warn me off from the encum-
 bered scene.
 This must not be; — and higher
 duties crave
 Some space between the theatre
 and the grave,
 That, like the Roman in the Capitol,
 I may adjust my mantle ere I fall:
 My life's brief act in public service
 flown,
 The last, the closing scene, must
 be my own.

Here, then, adieu! while yet
 some well-graced parts
 May fix an ancient favorite in your
 hearts,

Not quite to be forgotten, even
when
You look on better actors, younger
men:
And if your bosoms own this
kindly debt
Of old remembrance, how shall
mine forget—
O, how forget!—how oft I hither
came
In anxious hope, how oft returned
with fame!
How oft around your circle this
weak hand
Has waved immortal Shake-
speare's magic wand,
Till the full burst of inspiration
came,
And I have felt, and you have
fanned the flame!
By mem'ry treasured, while her
reign endures,
Those hours must live—and all
their charms are yours.

O favored Land! renowned for
arts and arms,
For manly talent, and for female
charms,
Could this full bosom prompt the
sinking line,
What fervent benedictions now
were thine!
But my last part is played, my
knell is rung,
When e'en your praise falls falter-
ing from my tongue;
And all that you can hear, or I
can tell,
Is—Friends and Patrons, hail,
and FARE YOU WELL.

THE SUN UPON THE WEIRD- LAW HILL

AIR—' *Rimhin alwin 'stu mo run* '

THE sun upon the Weirldaw Hill
In Ettrick's vale is sinking
sweet;

The westland wind is hush and
still,
The lake lies sleeping at my
feet.
Yet not the landscape to mine eye
Bears those bright hues that
once it bore,
Though evening with her richest
dye
Flames o'er the hills of Ettrick's
shore.

With listless look along the plain
I see Tweed's silver current
glide,
And coldly mark the holy fane
Of Melrose rise in ruined pride.
The quiet lake, the balmy air,
The hill, the stream, the tower,
the tree—
Are they still such as once they
were,
Or is the dreary change in me?

Alas! the warped and broken
board,
How can it bear the painter's
dye?
The harp of strained and tuneless
chord,
How to the minstrel's skill reply?
To aching eyes each landscape
lowers,
To feverish pulse each gale
blows chill;
And Araby's or Eden's bowers
Were barren as this moorland
hill.

SONG FROM ROB ROY

Published in 1817

TO THE MEMORY OF EDWARD
THE BLACK PRINCE

O FOR the voice of that wild horn,
On Fontarabian echoes borne,
The dying hero's call,
That told imperial Charlemagne

How Paynim sons of swarthy
Spain
Had wrought his champion's
fall.

Sad over earth and ocean sounding,
And England's distant cliffs as-
tounding,

Such are the notes should say
How Britain's hope, and France's
fear,

Victor of Cressy and Poitier,
In Bourdeaux dying lay.

'Raise my faint head, my squires,'
he said,

'And let the casement be display'd,
That I may see once more

The splendor of the setting sun
Gleam on thy mirror'd wave, Ga-
ronne,

And Blaye's empurpled shore.

'Like me, he sinks to Glory's
sleep,

His fall the dews of evening steep,
As if in sorrow shed.

So soft shall fall the trickling tear,
When England's maids and ma-
trons hear

Of their Black Edward dead.

'And though my sun of glory set,
Nor France nor England shall for-
get

The terror of my name ;
And oft shall Britain's heroes rise,
New planets in these southern
skies,

Through clouds of blood and
flame.'

THE MONKS OF BANGOR'S MARCH

AIR — 'Ymdaith Mionge'

WHEN the heathen trumpet's
clang

Round beleaguered Chester rang,

Veiled nun and friar gray
Marched from Bangor's fair Ab-
baye ;

High their holy anthem sounds,
Cestria's vale the hymn rebounds,
Floating down the sylvan Dee,
O miserere, Domine !

On the long procession goes,
Glory round their crosses glows,
And the Virgin-mother mild
In their peaceful banner smiled ;
Who could think such saintly
band

Doomed to feel unhallowed hand ?
Such was the Divine decree,
O miserere, Domine !

Bands that masses only sung,
Hands that censers only swung,
Met the northern bow and bill,
Heard the war-cry wild and shrill :
Woe to Brockmael's feeble hand,
Woe to Olfrid's bloody brand,
Woe to Saxon cruelty,
O miserere, Domine !

Weltering amid warriors slain,
Spurned by steeds with bloody
mane,
Slaughtered down by heathen
blade,

Bangor's peaceful monks are laid :
Word of parting rest unspoke,
Mass unsung and bread unbroke ;
For their souls for charity,
Sing, O miserere, Domine !

Bangor ! o'er the murder wail !
Long thy ruins told the tale,
Shattered towers and broken arch
Long recalled the woful march :
On thy shrine no tapers burn,
Never shall thy priests return ;
The pilgrim sighs and sings for
thee,
O miserere, Domine !

EPILOGUE TO THE APPEAL

SPOKEN BY MRS. HENRY SID-
DONS, FEB. 16, 1818

A CAT of yore — or else old Æsop
lied —
Was changed into a fair and
blooming bride,
But spied a mouse upon her mar-
riage-day,
Forgot her spouse and seized upon
her prey;
Even thus my bridegroom lawyer,
as you saw,
Threw off poor me and pounced
upon papa.
His neck from Hymen's mystic
knot made loose,
He twisted round my sire's the
literal noose.
Such are the fruits of our dramatic
labor
Since the New Jail became our
next-door neighbor.

Yes, times *are* changed; for in
your father's age
The lawyers were the patrons of
the stage;
However high advanced by future
fate,
There stands the bench [*points to
the Pit*] that first received
their weight.
The future legal sage 't was ours
to see
Doom though unwigged and plead
without a fee.

But now, astounding each poor
mimic elf,
Instead of lawyers comes the law
herself;
Tremendous neighbor, on our right
she dwells,
Builds high her towers and exca-
vates her cells;
While on the left she agitates the
town

With the tempestuous question,
Up or down?
'Twixt Scylla and Charybdis thus
stand we,
Law's final end and law's uncer-
tainty.
But, soft! who lives at Rome the
Pope must flatter,
And jails and lawsuits are no jest-
ing matter.
Then — just farewell! We wait
with serious awe
Till your applause or censure gives
the law.
Trusting our humble efforts may
assure ye,
We hold you Court and Counsel,
Judge and Jury.

MACKRIMMON'S LAMENT

AIR — '*Cha till mi tuille*'

MACLEOD's wizard flag from the
gray castle sallies,
The rowers are seated, unmoored
are the galleys;
Gleam war-axe and broadsword,
clang target and quiver,
As Mackrimmon sings, 'Farewell
to Dunvegan forever!
Farewell to each cliff on which
breakers are foaming;
Farewell, each dark glen in which
red-deer are roaming;
Farewell, lonely Skye, to lake,
mountain, and river;
Macleod may return, but Mack-
rimmon shall never!

'Farewell the bright clouds that
on Quillan are sleeping;
Farewell the bright eyes in the
Dun that are weeping;
To each minstrel delusion, fare-
well! — and forever —
Mackrimmon departs, to return to
you never!
The *Banshee's* wild voice sings the
death-dirge before me,

The pall of the dead for a mantle
hangs o'er me;
But my heart shall not flag and my
nerves shall not shiver,
Though devoted I go — to return
again never !

' Too oft shall the notes of Mack-
rimmon's bewailing
Be heard when the Gael on their
exile are sailing;
Dear land ! to the shores whence
unwilling we sever
Return — return — return shall we
never !

Cha till, cha till, cha till sin
tuille !

Cha till, cha till, cha till sin
tuille,

Cha till, cha till, cha till sin
tuille,

Gea thillis Macleod, cha till
Mackrimmon !'

DONALD CAIRD'S COME AGAIN

AIR — '*Malcolm Caird's come again*'

CHORUS

DONALD CAIRD'S come again !
Donald Caird's come again !

Tell the news in brugh and
glen,

Donald Caird's come again !

Donald Caird can lilt and sing,
Blithely dance the Hieland fling,
Drink till the gudeman be blind,
Fleece till the gudewife be kind;
Hoop a leglin, clout a pan,
Or crack a pow wi' ony man;
Tell the news in brugh and glen,
Donald Caird's come again.

Donald Caird's come again !

Donald Caird's come again !

Tell the news in brugh and
glen,

Donald Caird's come again.

Donald Caird can wire a maukin,
Kens the wiles o' dun-deer stauk-
in',

Leisters kipper, makes a shift
To shoot a muir-fowl in the drift;
Water-bailiffs, rangers, keepers,
He can wauk when they are sleep-
ers;

Not for bountith or reward

Dare ye mell wi' Donald Caird.

Donald Caird's come again !

Donald Caird's come again !

Gar the bagpipes hum amain,

Donald Caird's come again.

Donald Caird can drink a gill
Fast as hostler-wife can fill;
Ilka ane that sells gude liquor
Kens how Donald bends a bicker;
When he's fou he's stout and
saucy,

Keeps the cantle o' the cawsey;
Hieland chief and Lawland laird
Maun gie room to Donald Caird !

Donald Caird's come again !

Donald Caird's come again !

Tell the news in brugh and
glen,

Donald Caird's come again.

Steek the amrie, lock the kist,
Else some gear may weel be mist
Donald Caird finds orra things
Where Allan Gregor fand the
tings;

Dunts of kebbuck, taits o' woo,
Whiles a hen and whiles a sow,
Webs or duds frae hedge or yard —
'Ware the wuddie, Donald Caird !

Donald Caird's come again !

Donald Caird's come again !

Dinna let the Shirra ken

Donald Caird's come again.

On Donald Caird the doom was
stern,

Craig to tether, legs to airn;

But Donald Caird wi' mickle study
Caught the gift to cheat the wud-
die;

Rings of airn, and bolts of steel,
Fell like ice frae hand and heel !

Watch the sheep in fauld and glen,
 Donald Caird 's come again!
 Donald Caird 's come again!
 Donald Caird 's come again!
 Dinna let the Justice ken
 Donald Caird 's come again.

MADGE WILDFIRE'S SONGS

FROM THE HEART OF MID-
LOTHIAN

WHEN the gledd's in the blue
 cloud,
 The lav'rock lies still;
 When the hound's in the green-
 wood,
 The hind keeps the hill.

'O SLEEP ye sound, Sir James,'
 she said,
 'When ye suld rise and ride?
 There's twenty men, wi' bow and
 blade,
 Are seeking where ye hide.'

I GLANCE like the wildfire thro'
 country and town;
 I'm seen on the causeway—I'm
 seen on the down;
 The lightning that flashes so bright
 and so free,
 Is scarcely so blithe or so bonny
 as me.

WHAT did ye wi' the bridal ring—
 bridal ring—bridal ring?
 What did ye wi' your wedding
 ring, ye little cutty quean,
 O?
 I gied it till a sodger, a sodger, a
 sodger,
 I gied it till a sodger, an auld true
 love o' mine, O.

GOOD even, good fair moon, good
 even to thee;
 I prithee, dear moon, now show to
 me

The form and the features, the
 speech and degree,
 Of the man that true lover of mine
 shall be.

It is the bonny butcher lad,
 That wears the sleeves of blue;
 He sells the flesh on Saturday,
 On Friday that he slew.

THERE 's a bloodhound ranging
 Tinwald Wood,
 There 's harness glancing sheen;
 There 's a maiden sits on Tinwald
 brae,
 And she sings loud between.

WITH my curtch on my foot, and
 my shoe on my hand,
 I glance like the wildfire through
 brugh and through land.

IN the bonnie cells of Bedlam,
 Ere I was ane and twenty,
 I had hempen bracelets strong,
 And merry whips, ding-dong,
 And prayer and fasting plenty.

I'M Madge of the country, I'm
 Madge of the town,
 And I'm Madge of the lad I am
 blithest to own,—
 The Lady of Beever in diamonds
 may shine,
 But has not a heart half so light-
 some as mine.

I am Queen of the Wake, and I'm
 Lady of May,
 And I lead the blithe ring round
 the May-pole to-day;
 The wild-fire that flashes so fair
 and so free
 Was never so bright, or so bonnie
 as me.

OUR work is over—over now,
 The goodman wipes his weary
 brow,
 The last long wain wends slow
 away,
 And we are free to sport and play.

The night comes on when sets the
sun,
And labor ends when day is done.
When Autumn's gone, and Win-
ter's come.
We hold our jovial harvest-home.

WHEN the fight of grace is
fought,—
When the marriage vest is
wrought,—
When Faith has chased cold Doubt
away—
And Hope but sickens at delay,—

When Charity, imprisoned here,
Longs for a more expanded sphere;
Doff thy robes of sin and clay;
Christian, rise, and come away.

CAULD is my bed, Lord Archibald,
And sad my sleep of sorrow;
But thine shall be as sad and cauld,
My fause true-love! to-morrow.

And weep ye not, my maidens free,
Though death your mistress bor-
row;
For he for whom I die to-day,
Shall die for me to-morrow.

PROUD Maisie is in the wood,
Walking so early;
Sweet Robin sits on the bush,
Singing so rarely.

'Tell me, thou bonny bird,
When shall I marry me?'
'When six braw gentlemen
Kirkward shall carry ye.'

'Who makes the bridal bed,
Birdie, say truly?'
'The gray-headed sexton
That delves the grave duly.'

'The glow-worm o'er grave and
stone
Shall light thee steady.
The owl from the steeple sing,
"Welcome, proud lady."'

THE BATTLE OF SEMPACH

'T WAS when among our linden-
trees
The bees had housed in
swarms—
And gray-haired peasants say that
these
Betoken foreign arms—

Then looked we down to Willi-
sow,
The land was all in flame;
We knew the Archduke Leopold
With all his army came.

The Austrian nobles made their
vow,
So hot their heart and bold, 10
'On Switzer carles we'll trample
now,
And slay both young and old.'

With clarion loud and banner
proud,
From Zurich on the lake,
In martial pomp and fair ar-
ray
Their onward march they make.

'Now list, ye lowland nobles all—
Ye seek the mountain-strand,
Nor wot ye what shall be your
lot
In such a dangerous land. 20

'I rede ye, shrive ye of your
sins
Before ye farther go;
A skirmish in Helvetian hills
May send your souls to woe.'

'But where now shall we find a
priest
Our shrift that he may hear?'—
'The Switzer priest has ta'en the
field,
He deals a penance drear.

'Right heavily upon your head
He'll lay his hand of steel, 30

And with his trusty partisan
Your absolution deal.'

'T was on a Monday morning then,
The corn was steeped in dew,
And merry maids had sickles ta'en,
When the host to Sempach drew.

The stalwart men of fair Lucerne,
Together have they joined;
The pith and core of manhood
stern,
Was none cast looks behind. 40

It was the Lord of Hare-castle,
And to the Duke he said,
'Yon little band of brethren true
Will meet us undismayed.' —

'O Hare-castle, thou heart of hare!'
Fierce Oxenstern replied. —
'Shalt see then how the game will
fare,'
The taunted knight replied.

There was lacing then of helmets
bright,
And closing ranks amain; 50
The peaks they hewed from their
boot-points
Might well-nigh load a wain.

And thus they to each other said,
'Yon handful down to hew
Will be no boastful tale to tell,
The peasants are so few.'

The gallant Swiss Confederates
there,
They prayed to God aloud,
And he displayed his rainbow fair
Against a swarthy cloud. 60

Then heart and pulse throbbed
more and more
With courage firm and high,
And down the good Confederates
bore
On the Austrian chivalry.

The Austrian Lion 'gan to growl
And toss his mane and tail,

And ball and shaft and crossbow
bolt
Went whistling forth like hail.

Lance, pike, and halbert mingled
there, 69
The game was nothing sweet;
The bough of many a stately tree
Lay shivered at their feet.

The Austrian men-at-arms stood
fast,
So close their spears they laid;
It chafed the gallant Winkel-
reid,
Who to his comrades said —

'I have a virtuous wife at home,
A wife and infant son;
I leave them to my country's
care, —
This field shall soon be won. 80

'These nobles lay their spears
right thick
And keep full firm array,
Yet shall my charge their order
break
And make my brethren way.'

He rushed against the Austrian
band,
In desperate career,
And with his body, breast, and
hand,
Bore down each hostile spear.

Four lances splintered on his crest,
Six shivered in his side; 90
Still on the serried files he
pressed
He broke their ranks and died.

This patriot's self-devoted deed
First tamed the Lion's mood,
And the four Forest Cantons freed
From thralldom by his blood.

Right where his charge had made
a laue
His valiant comrades burst,

With sword and axe and parti-
san,
And hack and stab and thrust, 100

The daunted Lion 'gan to whine
And granted ground amain,
The Mountain Bull he bent his
brows,
And gored his sides again.

Then lost was banner, spear, and
shield
At Sempach in the flight,
The cloister vaults at Konig's
field
Hold many an Austrian knight.

It was the Archduke Leopold,
So lordly would he ride, 110
But he came against the Switzer
churls,
And they slew him in his pride.

The heifer said unto the bull,
'And shall I not complain?
There came a foreign nobleman
To milk me on the plain.

'One thrust of thine outrageous
horn
Has galled the knight so sore
That to the churchyard he is
borne,
To range our glens no
more.' 120

An Austrian noble left the stour,
And fast the flight 'gan take;
And he arrived in luckless hour
At Sempach on the lake.

He and his squire a fisher called —
His name was Hans von Rot —
'For love or meed or charity,
Receive us in thy boat!'

Their anxious call the fisher
heard,
And, glad the meed to win, 130

His shallop to the shore he steered
And took the flyers in.

And while against the tide and
wind
Hans stoutly rowed his way,
The noble to his follower signed
He should the boatman slay.

The fisher's back was to them
turned,
The squire his dagger drew,
Hans saw his shadow in the lake.
The boat he overthrew. 140

He whelmed the boat, and as they
strove
He stunned them with his oar,
'Now, drink ye deep, my gentle
sirs,
You'll ne'er stab boatman
more.

'Two gilded fishes in the lake
This morning have I caught,
Their silver scales may much
avail,
Their carrion flesh is naught.'

It was a messenger of woe 149
Has sought the Austrian land:
'Ah! gracious lady, evil news!
My lord lies on the strand.

'At Sempach, on the battle-field,
His bloody corpse lies there,' —
'Ah, gracious God!' the lady cried,
'What tidings of despair!'

Now would you know the minstrel
wight
Who sings of strife so stern,
Albert the Souter is he hight,
A burgher of Lucerne. 160

A merry man was he, I wot,
The night he made the lay,
Returning from the bloody spot
Where God had judged the day.

THE NOBLE MORINGER

AN ANCIENT BALLAD

O, WILL you hear a knightly tale of old Bohemian day,
 It was the noble Moringer in wedlock bed he lay;
 He halsed and kissed his dearest dame that was as sweet as May,
 And said, 'Now, lady of my heart, attend the words I say.

'T is I have vowed a pilgrimage unto a distant shrine,
 And I must seek Saint Thomas-land and leave the land that 's mine;
 Here shalt thou dwell the while in state, so thou wilt pledge thy fay
 That thou for my return wilt wait seven twelvemonths and a day.'

Then out and spoke that lady bright, sore troubled in her cheer,
 'Now tell me true, thou noble knight, what order takest thou here; 10
 And who shall lead thy vassal band and hold thy lordly sway,
 And be thy lady's guardian true when thou art far away?'

Out spoke the noble Moringer, 'Of that have thou no care,
 There 's many a valiant gentleman of me holds living fair;
 The trustiest shall rule my land, my vassals, and my state,
 And be a guardian tried and true to thee, my lovely mate.

'As Christian-man, I needs must keep the vow which I have plight,
 When I am far in foreign land, remember thy true knight;
 And cease, my dearest dame, to grieve, for vain were sorrow now,
 But grant thy Moringer his leave, since God hath heard his vow.' 20

It was the noble Moringer from bed he made him boune,
 And met him there his chamberlain with ewer and with gown:
 He flung the mantle on his back, 't was furred with miniver,
 He dipped his hand in water cold and bathed his forehead fair.

'Now hear,' he said, 'Sir Chamberlain, true vassal art thou mine,
 And such the trust that I repose in that proved worth of thine,
 For seven years shalt thou rule my towers and lead my vassal train,
 And pledge thee for my lady's faith till I return again.'

The chamberlain was blunt and true, and sturdily said he,
 'Abide, my lord, and rule your own, and take this rede from me; 30
 That woman's faith 's a brittle trust — Seven twelvemonths didst thou
 say?

I 'll pledge me for no lady's truth beyond the seventh fair day.'

The noble baron turned him round, his heart was full of care,
 His gallant esquire stood him nigh, he was Marstetten's heir, .
 To whom he spoke right anxiously, 'Thou trusty squire to me,
 Wilt thou receive this weighty trust when I am o'er the sea?

'To watch and ward my castle strong, and to protect my land,
 And to the hunting or the host to lead my vassal band;

And pledge thee for my lady's faith till seven long years are gone,
And guard her as Our Lady dear was guarded by Saint John.'

40

Marstetten's heir was kind and true, but fiery, hot, and young,
And readily he answer made with too presumptuous tongue :
' My noble lord, cast care away and on your journey wend,
And trust this charge to me until your pilgrimage have end.

' Rely upon my plighted faith, which shall be truly tried,
To guard your lands, and ward your towers, and with your vassals
ride;

And for your lovely lady's faith, so virtuous and so dear,
I 'll gage my head it knows no change, be absent thirty year.'

The noble Moringer took cheer when thus he heard him speak,
And doubt forsook his troubled brow and sorrow left his cheek ;
A long adieu he bids to all — hoists topsails and away,
And wanders in Saint Thomas-land seven twelvemonths and a day.

50

It was the noble Moringer within an orchard slept,
When on the baron's slumbering sense a boding vision crept ;
And whispered in his ear a voice, ' 'T is time, Sir Knight, to wake,
Thy lady and thy heritage another master take.

' Thy tower another banner knows, thy steeds another rein,
And stoop them to another's will thy gallant vassal train ;
And she, the lady of thy love, so faithful once and fair,
This night within thy fathers' hall she weds Marstetten's heir.'

60

It is the noble Moringer starts up and tears his beard,
O, would that I had ne'er been born ! what tidings have I heard !
To lose my lordship and my lands the less would be my care,
But, God ! that e'er a squire untrue should wed my lady fair.

' O good Saint Thomas, hear,' he prayed, ' my patron saint art thou,
A traitor robs me of my land even while I pay my vow !
My wife he brings to infamy that was so pure of name,
And I am far in foreign land and must endure the shame.'

It was the good Saint Thomas then who heard his pilgrim's prayer,
And sent a sleep so deep and dead that it o'erpowered his care ;
He waked in fair Bohemian land outstretched beside a rill,
High on the right a castle stood, low on the left a mill.

70

The Moringer he started up as one from spell unbound,
And dizzy with surprise and joy gazed wildly all around ;
' I know my fathers' ancient towers, the mill, the stream I know,
Now blessed be my patron saint who cheered his pilgrim's woe !'

He leant upon his pilgrim staff and to the mill he drew,
So altered was his goodly form that none their master knew ;

The baron to the miller said, ' Good friend, for charity,
Tell a poor palmer in your land what tidings may there be ? ' 80

The miller answered him again, ' He knew of little news,
Save that the lady of the land did a new bridegroom choose ;
Her husband died in distant land, such is the constant word,
His death sits heavy on our souls, he was a worthy lord.

' Of him I held the little mill which wins me living free,
God rest the baron in his grave, he still was kind to me !
And when Saint Martin's tide comes round and millers take their toll,
The priest that prays for Moringer shall have both cope and stole.'

It was the noble Moringer to climb the hill began,
And stood before the bolted gate a woe and weary man ; 90
' Now help me, every saint in heaven that can compassion take,
To gain the entrance of my hall this woful match to break.'

His very knock it sounded sad, his call was sad and slow,
For heart and head, and voice and hand, were heavy all with woe ;
And to the warder thus he spoke : ' Friend, to thy lady say,
A pilgrim from Saint Thomas-land craves harbor for a day.

' I've wandered many a weary step, my strength is well-nigh done,
And if she turn me from her gate I'll see no morrow's sun ;
I pray for sweet Saint Thomas' sake a pilgrim's bed and dole,
And for the sake of Moringer's her once-loved husband's soul.' 100

It was the stalwart warder then he came his dame before,
' A pilgrim, worn and travel-toiled, stands at the castle-door ;
And prays, for sweet Saint Thomas' sake, for harbor and for dole,
And for the sake of Moringer, thy noble husband's soul.'

The lady's gentle heart was moved, ' Do up the gate,' she said,
' And bid the wanderer welcome be to banquet and to bed ;
And since he names my husband's name, so that he lists to stay,
These towers shall be his harborage a twelvemonth and a day.'

It was the stalwart warder then undid the portal broad,
It was the noble Moringer that o'er the threshold strode ; 110
' And have thou thanks, kind Heaven,' he said, ' though from a man of
sin,
That the true lord stands here once more his castle-gate within.'

Then up the halls paced Moringer, his step was sad and slow ;
It sat full heavy on his heart none seemed their lord to know ;
He sat him on a lowly bench, oppressed with woe and wrong,
Short space he sat, but ne'er to him seemed little space so long.

Now spent was day and feasting o'er, and come was evening hour,
The time was nigh when new-made brides retire to nuptial bower ;

'Our castle's wont,' a bridesman said, 'hath been both firm and long
No guest to harbor in our halls till he shall chant a song.'

120

Then spoke the youthful bridegroom there as he sat by the bride,
'My merry minstrel folk,' quoth he, 'lay shalm and harp aside;
Our pilgrim guest must sing a lay, the castle's rule to hold,
And well his guerdon will I pay with garment and with gold.'

'Chill flows the lay of frozen age,' 't was thus the pilgrim sung,
'Nor golden meed nor garment gay unlocks his heavy tongue;
Once did I sit, thou bridegroom gay, at board as rich as thine,
And by my side as fair a bride with all her charms was mine.

'But time traced furrows on my face and I grew silver-haired,
For locks of brown and cheeks of youth she left this brow and beard;
Once rich, but now a palmer poor, I tread life's latest stage,
And mingle with your bridal mirth the lay of frozen age.'

129

It was the noble lady there this woful lay that hears,
And for the aged pilgrim's grief her eye was dimmed with tears;
She bade her gallant cupbearer a golden beaker take,
And bear it to the palmer poor to quaff it for her sake.

It was the noble Moringer that dropped amid the wine
A bridal ring of burning gold so costly and so fine:
Now listen, gentles, to my song, it tells you but the sooth,
'T was with that very ring of gold he pledged his bridal truth.

140

Then to the cupbearer he said, 'Do me one kindly deed,
And should my better days return, full rich shall be thy meed;
Bear back the golden cup again to yonder bride so gay,
And crave her of her courtesy to pledge the palmer gray.'

The cupbearer was courtly bred nor was the boon denied,
The golden cup he took again and bore it to the bride;
'Lady,' he said, 'your reverend guest sends this, and bids me pray
That, in thy noble courtesy, thou pledge the palmer gray.'

The ring hath caught the lady's eye, she views it close and near,
Then might you hear her shriek aloud, 'The Moringer is here!' 150
Then might you see her start from seat while tears in torrents
fell,

But whether 't was for joy or woe the ladies best can tell.

But loud she uttered thanks to Heaven and every saintly power
That had returned the Moringer before the midnight hour;
And loud she uttered vow on vow that never was there bride
That had like her preserved her troth or been so sorely tried.

'Yes, here I claim the praise,' she said, 'to constant matrons due,
Who keep the troth that they have plight so steadfastly and true;

For count the term howe'er you will, so that you count aright, 159
Seven twelvemonths and a day are out when bells toll twelve to-night.'

It was Marstetten then rose up, his falchion there he drew,
He kneeled before the Moringer, and down his weapon threw;
'My oath and knightly faith are broke,' these were the words he said,
'Then take, my liege, thy vassal's sword, and take thy vassal's head.'

The noble Moringer he smiled, and then aloud did say,
'He gathers wisdom that hath roamed seven twelvemonths and a
day;
My daughter now hath fifteen years, fame speaks her sweet and fair,
I give her for the bride you lose and name her for my heir.

'The young bridegroom hath youthful bride, the old bridegroom the
old,
Whose faith was kept till term and tide so punctually were told; 170
But blessings on the warder kind that oped my castle gate,
For had I come at morrow tide, I came a day too late.'

EPITAPH ON MRS. ERSKINE

PLAIN as her native dignity of
mind,
Arise the tomb of her we have re-
signed;
Unflawed and stainless be the
marble scroll,
Emblem of lovely form and candid
soul.—
But, O, what symbol may avail to
tell
The kindness, wit, and sense we
loved so well!
What sculpture show the broken
ties of life,
Here buried with the parent,
friend, and wife!
Or on the tablet stamp each title
dear
By which thine urn, EUPHEMIA,
claims the tear!
Yet taught by thy meek sufferance
to assume
Patience in anguish, hope beyond
the tomb,
Resigned, though sad, this votive
verse shall flow,
And brief, alas! as thy brief span
below.

SONGS FROM THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR

I

'LOOK NOT THOU ON BEAUTY'S
CHARMING'

LOOK not thou on beauty's charm-
ing;
Sit thou still when kings are arm-
ing;
Taste not when the wine-cup glis-
tens;
Speak not when the people listens;
Stop thine ear against the singer;
From the red gold keep thy finger;
Vacant heart and hand and eye,
Easy live and quiet die.

II

'THE MONK MUST ARISE WHEN
THE MATINS RING'

THE monk must arise when the
matins ring,
The abbot may sleep to their
chime;

But the yeoman must start when
the bugles sing,
'T is time, my hearts, 't is time.

There's bucks and raes on Bill-
hope braes,
There's a herd on Shortwood
Shaw;
But a lily-white doe in the garden
goes,
She's fairly worth them a'.

III

'WHEN THE LAST LAIRD OF
RAVENSWOOD TO RAVENS-
WOOD SHALL RIDE'

WHEN the last Laird of Ravens-
wood to Ravenswood shall
ride,
And woo a dead maiden to be his
bride,
He shall stable his steed in the
Kelpie's flow,
And his name shall be lost for-
evermoe!

SONGS FROM THE LEGEND
OF MONTROSE

I

ANCIENT GAELIC MELODY

BIRDS of omen dark and foul,
Night-crow, raven, bat, and owl,
Leave the sick man to his dream—
All night long he heard you scream.
Haste to cave and ruined tower,
Ivy tod or dinged bower,
There to wink and mop, for, hark!
In the mid air sings the lark.

Hie to moorish gills and rocks,
Prowling wolf and wily fox,—
Hie ye fast, nor turn your view,
Though the lamb bleats to the
ewe.

Couch your trains and speed your
flight,
Safety parts with parting night;

And on distant echo borne,
Comes the hunter's early horn.

The moon's wan crescent scarcely
gleams,
Ghost-like she fades in morning
beams;
Hie hence, each peevish imp and
fay
That scare the pilgrim on his
way.—
Quench, kelpy! quench, in bog
and fen,
Thy torch that cheats benighted
men;
Thy dance is o'er, thy reign is
done,
For Benyieglo hath seen the sun.

Wild thoughts, that, sinful, dark,
and deep,
O'erpower the passive mind in
sleep,
Pass from the slumberer's soul
away,
Like night-mists from the brow of
day:
Foul hag, whose blasted visage
grim
Smothers the pulse, unnerves the
limb,
Spur thy dark palfrey and be-
gone!
Thou darest not face the godlike
sun.

II

THE ORPHAN MAID

NOVEMBER'S hail-cloud drifts
away,
November's sunbeam wan
Looks coldly on the castle gray,
When forth comes Lady Anne.

The orphan by the oak was set,
Her arms, her feet, were bare;

The hail-drops had not melted
yet
Amid her raven hair.

'And, dame,' she said, 'by all the
ties
That child and mother know,
Aid one who never knew these
joys, —
Relieve an orphan's woe.'

The lady said, 'An orphan's state
Is hard and sad to bear;
Yet worse the widowed mother's
fate,
Who mourns both lord and heir.

'Twelve times the rolling year has
sped
Since, while from vengeance
wild
Of fierce Strathallan's chief I fled,
Forth's eddies whelmed my
child.'

'Twelve times the year its course
has borne,'
The wandering maid replied;
'Since fishers on Saint Bridget's
morn
Drew nets on Campsie side.

'Saint Bridget sent no scaly spoil;
An infant, well-nigh dead,
They saved and reared in want
and toil,
To beg from you her bread.'

That orphan maid the lady kissed,
'My husband's looks you bear;
Saint Bridget and her morn be
blessed!
You are his widow's heir.'

They've robbed that maid, so poor
and pale,
In silk and sandals rare;
And pearls, for drops of frozen
hail,
Are glistening in her hair.

VERSES FROM IVANHOE

I

THE CRUSADER'S RETURN

HIGH deeds achieved of knightly
fame,
From Palestine the champion
came;
The cross upon his shoulders
borne,
Battle and blast had dimmed and
torn.
Each dint upon his battered shield
Was token of a foughten field;
And thus, beneath his lady's
bower,
He sung, as fell the twilight
hour:

'Joy to the fair! — thy knight be-
hold,
Returned from yonder land of gold;
No wealth he brings, nor wealth
can need,
Save his good arms and battle-
steed;
His spurs to dash against a foe,
His lance and sword to lay him
low;
Such all the trophies of his toil
Such — and the hope of Tekla's
smile!

'Joy to the fair! whose constant
knight
Her favor fired to feats of might!
Unnoted shall she not remain
Where meet the bright and noble
train;
Minstrel shall sing, and herald
tell —
"Mark yonder maid of beauty
well,
'T is she for whose bright eyes was
won
The listed field at Ascalon!

"Note well her smile! — it edged
the blade

Which fifty wives to widows made,
 When, vain his strength and Ma-
 hound's spell,
 Iconium's turbaned Soldan fell.
 See'st thou her locks, whose sunny
 glow
 Half shows, half shades, her neck
 of snow?
 Twines not of them one golden
 thread,
 But for its sake a Paynim bled."

'Joy to the fair!—my name un-
 known,
 Each deed, and all its praise, thine
 own;
 Then, oh! unbar this churlish
 gate,
 The night-dew falls, the hour is
 late.
 Inured to Syria's glowing breath,
 I feel the north breeze chill as
 death;
 Let grateful love quell maiden
 shame,
 And grant him bliss who brings
 thee fame.'

II

THE BAREFOOTED FRIAR

I'LL give thee, good fellow, a
 twelvemonth or twain
 To search Europe through from
 Byzantium to Spain;
 But ne'er shall you find, should
 you search till you tire,
 So happy a man as the Barefooted
 Friar.

Your knight for his lady pricks
 forth in career,
 And is brought home at even-song
 pricked through with a
 spear;
 I confess him in haste—for his
 lady desires
 No comfort on earth save the
 Barefooted Friar's.

Your monarch!—Pshaw! many a
 prince has been known
 To barter his robes for our cowl
 and our gown,
 But which of us e'er felt the idle
 desire
 To exchange for a crown the gray
 hood of a friar?

The Friar has walked out, and
 where'er he has gone
 The land and its fatness is marked
 for his own;
 He can roam where he lists, he can
 stop where he tires,
 For every man's house is the Bare-
 footed Friar's.

He's expected at noon, and no
 wight till he comes
 May profane the great chair or the
 porridge of plums;
 For the best of the cheer, and the
 seat by the fire,
 Is the denied right of the Bare-
 footed Friar.

He's expected at night, and the
 pasty's made hot,
 They broach the brown ale and
 they fill the black pot;
 And the good-wife would wish the
 good-man in the mire,
 Ere he lacked a soft pillow, the
 Barefooted Friar.

Long flourish the sandal, the cord,
 and the cope,
 The dread of the devil and trust of
 the Pope!
 For to gather life's roses, un-
 scathed by the briar,
 Is granted alone to the Barefooted
 Friar.

III

'NORMAN SAW ON ENGLISH OAK'

NORMAN saw on English oak,
 On English neck a Norman yoke;

Norman spoon in English dish,
And England ruled as Normans
wish;
Blithe world in England never will
be more,
Till England's rid of all the four.

IV

WAR-SONG

1

WHET the bright steel,
Sons of the White Dragon!
Kindle the torch,
Daughter of Hengist!
The steel glimmers not for the
carving of the banquet,
It is hard, broad, and sharply
pointed;
The torch goeth not to the bridal
chamber,
It steams and glitters blue with
sulphur.
Whet the steel, the raven croaks!
Light the torch, Zernebock is yell-
ing!
Whet the steel, sons of the Dra-
gon!
Kindle the torch, daughter of
Hengist!

2

The black clouds are low over the
thane's castle
The eagle screams — he rides on
their bosom.
Scream not, gray rider of the sable
cloud,
Thy banquet is prepared!
The maidens of Valhalla look
forth,
The race of Hengist will send them
guests.
Shake your black tresses, maidens
of Valhalla!
And strike your loud timbrels for
joy!

Many a haughty step bends to
your halls,
Many a helmed head.

3

Dark sits the evening upon the
thane's castle,
The black clouds gather round;
Soon shall they be red as the blood
of the valiant!
The destroyer of forests shall shake
his red crest against them;
He, the bright consumer of palaces,
Broad waves he his blazing banner,
Red, white, and dusky,
Over the strife of the valiant;
His joy is in the clashing swords
and broken bucklers;
He loves to lick the hissing blood
as it bursts warm from the
wound!

4

All must perish!
The sword cleaveth the helmet;
The strong armor is pierced by
the lance;
Fire devoureth the dwelling of
princes,
Engines break down the fences of
the battle.
All must perish!
The race of Hengist is gone —
The name of Horsa is no more!
Shrink not then from your doom,
sons of the sword!
Let your blades drink blood like
wine;
Feast ye in the banquet of slaugh-
ter,
By the light of the blazing halls!
Strong be your swords while your
blood is warm,
And spare neither for pity nor
fear,
For vengeance hath but an hour;
Strong hate itself shall expire!
I also must perish.

V

REBECCA'S HYMN

WHEN Israel of the Lord beloved
 Out from the land of bondage
 came,
 Her fathers' God before her
 moved,
 An awful guide in smoke and
 flame.
 By day, along the astonished lands
 The cloudy pillar glided slow;
 By night, Arabia's crimsoned sands
 Returned the fiery column's glow.

There rose the choral hymn of
 praise,
 And trump and timbrel answered
 keen,
 And Zion's daughters poured their
 lays,
 With priest's and warrior's voice
 between.
 No portents now our foes amaze,
 Forsaken Israel wanders lone:
 Our fathers would not know Thy
 ways,
 And Thou hast left them to their
 own.

But present still, though now un-
 seen,
 When brightly shines the pro-
 sperous day,
 Be thoughts of Thee a cloudy
 screen
 To temper the deceitful ray!
 And O, when stoops on Judah's
 path
 In shade and storm the frequent
 night,
 Be Thou, long-suffering, slow to
 wrath,
 A burning and a shining light!

Our harps we left by Babel's
 streams,

The tyrant's jest, the Gentile's
 scorn;
 No censor round our altar beams,
 And mute are timbrel, harp, and
 horn.
 But Thou hast said, The blood of
 goat,
 The flesh of rams I will not
 prize;
 A contrite heart, a humble thought,
 Are mine accepted sacrifice.

VI

THE BLACK KNIGHT AND WAMBA

ANNA-MARIE, love, up is the
 sun
 Anna-Marie, love, morn is begun,
 Mists are dispersing, love, birds
 singing free,
 Up in the morning, love, Anna-
 Marie.
 Anna-Marie, love, up in the morn,
 The hunter is winding blithe
 sounds on his horn,
 The echo rings merry from rock
 and from tree,
 'Tis time to arouse thee, love,
 Anna-Marie.

O TYBALT, love, Tybalt, awake me
 not yet,
 Around my soft pillow while softer
 dreams flit;
 For what are the joys that in wak-
 ing we prove,
 Compared with these visions, O
 Tybalt! my love?
 Let the birds to the rise of the
 mist carol shrill,
 Let the hunter blow out his loud
 horn on the hill,
 Softer sounds, softer pleasures, in
 slumber I prove,
 But think not I dreamed of thee,
 Tybalt, my love.

VII

ANOTHER CAROL BY THE SAME

KNIGHT AND WAMBA

THERE came three merry men
from south, west, and north,
Evermore sing the roundelay;
To win the Widow of Wycombe
forth,
And where was the widow might
say them nay?

The first was a knight, and from
Tynedale he came,
Evermore sing the roundelay;
And his fathers, God save us, were
men of great fame,
And where was the widow might
say him nay?

Of his father the laird, of his uncle
the squire,
He boasted in rhyme and in
roundelay;
She bade him go bask by his sea-
coal fire,
For she was the widow would
say him nay.

WAMBA

The next that came forth swore
by blood and by nails,
Merrily sing the roundelay;
Hur's a gentleman, God wot, and
hur's lineage was of Wales,
And where was the widow might
say him nay?

Sir David ap Morgan ap Griffith ap
Hugh
Ap Tudor Ap Rhice, quoth his
roundelay;
She said that one widow for so
many was too few,
And she bade the Welshman
wend his way.

But then next came a yeoman, a
yeoman of Kent,

Jollily singing his roundelay;
He spoke to the widow of living
and rent,
And where was the widow could
say him nay?

BOTH

So the knight and the squire were
both left in the mire,
There for to sing the roundelay;
For a yeoman of Kent, with his
yearly rent,
There ne'er was a widow could
say him nay.

VIII

FUNERAL HYMN

DUST unto dust,
To this all must;
The tenant hath resigned
The faded form
To waste and worm —
Corruption claims her kind.

Through paths unknown
Thy soul hath flown
To seek the realms of woe,
Where fiery pain
Shall purge the stain
Of actions done below.

In that sad place,
By Mary's grace,
Brief may thy dwelling be!
Till prayers and alms,
And holy psalms,
Shall set the captive free.

VERSES FROM THE MONAS-
TERY

I

ANSWER TO INTRODUCTORY
EPISTLE

TAKE thou no scorn,
Of fiction born,

Fair fiction's muse to woo;
 Old Homer's theme
 Was but a dream,
 Himself a fiction too.

II

BORDER SONG

1

MARCH, march, Ettrick and Te-
 viotdale,
 Why the deil dinna ye march
 forward in order?
 March, march, Eskdale and Lid-
 desdale,
 All the Blue Bonnets are bound
 for the Border.
 Many a banner spread,
 Flutters above your head,
 Many a crest that is famous in
 story.
 Mount and make ready then,
 Sons of the mountain glen,
 Fight for the Queen and our old
 Scottish glory.

2

Come from the hills where your
 hirsels are grazing,
 Come from the glen of the buck
 and the roe;
 Come to the crag where the bea-
 con is blazing,
 Come with the buckler, the
 lance, and the bow.
 Trumpets are sounding,
 War-steeds are bounding,
 Stand to your arms and march
 in good order;
 England shall many a day
 Tell of the bloody fray,
 When the Blue Bonnets came
 over the Border.

III

SONGS OF THE WHITE LADY OF
 AVENEL

FORDING THE RIVER

1

MERRILY swim we, the moon
 shines bright,
 Both current and ripple are dan-
 cing in light.
 We have roused the night raven,
 I heard him croak,
 As we plashed along beneath the
 oak
 That flings its broad branches so
 far and so wide,
 Their shadows are dancing in
 midst of the tide.
 'Who wakens my nestlings!' the
 raven he said,
 'My beak shall ere morn in his
 blood be red!
 For a blue swollen corpse is a
 dainty meal,
 And I 'll have my share with the
 pike and the eel.'

2

Merrily swim we, the moon shines
 bright,
 There's a golden gleam on the dis-
 tant height;
 There's a silver shower on the
 alders dank,
 And the drooping willows that
 wave on the bank.
 I see the Abbey, both turret and
 tower,
 It is all astir for the vesper hour;
 The Monks for the chapel are leav-
 ing each cell,
 But where's Father Philip should
 toll the bell?

3

Merrily swim we, the moon shines
 bright,

Downward we drift through
shadow and light.
Under yon rock the eddies sleep,
Calm and silent, dark and deep.
The Kelpy has risen from the
fathomless pool,
He has lighted his candle of death
and of dool:
Look, Father, look, and you'll
laugh to see
How he gapes and glares with his
eyes on thee!

4

Good luck to your fishing, whom
watch ye to-night?
A man of mean or a man of might?
Is it layman or priest that must
float in your cove,
Or lover who crosses to visit his
love?
Hark! heard ye the Kelpy reply
as we passed,
'God's blessing on the warder, he
locked the bridge fast!
All that come to my cove are
sunk,
Priest or layman, lover or monk.'

LANDED — landed! the black book
hath won,
Else had you seen Berwick with
morning sun!
Sain ye, and save ye, and blithe
mot ye be,
For seldom they land that go swim-
ming with me.

IV

TO THE SUB-PRIOR

Good evening, Sir Priest, and so
late as you ride,
With your mule so fair, and your
mantle so wide;
But ride you through valley, or
ride you o'er hill,

There is one that has warrant to
wait on you still.
Back, back,
The volume black!
I have a warrant to carry it back.
What, ho! Sub-Prior, and came
you but here
To conjure a book from a dead
woman's bier?
Sain you, and save you, be wary
and wise,
Ride back with the book, or you'll
pay for your prize.
Back, back,
There's death in the track!
In the name of my master, I bid
thee bear back.

THAT which is neither ill nor well,
That which belongs not to heaven
nor to hell,
A wreath of the mist, a bubble of
the stream,
'Twixt a waking thought and a
sleeping dream;
A form that men spy
With the half-shut eye
In the beams of the setting sun,
am I.

Vainly, Sir Prior, wouldst thou
bar me my right!
Like the star when it shoots, I can
dart through the night;
I can dance on the torrent, and
ride on the air,
And travel the world with the
bonny night-mare.
Again, again,
At the crook of the glen,
Where bickers the burnie, I'll
meet thee again.

MEN of good are bold as sackless,
Men of rude are wild and reckless.
Lie thou still
In the nook of the hill,
For those be before thee that wish
thee ill.

V

HALBERT'S INCANTATION

THRICE to the holly brake —
 Thrice to the well :—
 I bid thee awake,
 White Maid of Avenel!

Noon gleams on the Lake —
 Noon glows on the Fell —
 Wake thee, O wake,
 White Maid of Avenel.

VI

TO HALBERT

THE WHITE MAID OF AVENEL

YOUTH of the dark eye, wherefore
 didst thou call me?
 Wherefore art thou here, if terrors
 can appall thee?
 He that seeks to deal with us
 must know nor fear nor fail-
 ing;
 To coward and churl our speech
 is dark, our gifts are unavail-
 ing.
 The breeze that brought me hither
 now must sweep Egyptian
 ground,
 The fleecy cloud on which I ride
 for Arabv is bound;
 The fleecy cloud is drifting by, the
 breeze sighs for my stay,
 For I must sail a thousand miles
 before the close of day.

WHAT I am I must not show —
 What I am thou couldst not
 know —
 Something betwixt heaven and
 hell —
 Something that neither stood nor
 fell —

Something that through thy wit
 or will
 May work thee good — may work
 thee ill.
 Neither substance quite, nor
 shadow,
 Haunting lonely moor and mea-
 dow,
 Dancing by the haunted spring,
 Riding on the whirlwind's wing;
 Aping in fantastic fashion
 Every change of human pas-
 sion,
 While o'er our frozen minds they
 pass,
 Like shadows from the mirrored
 glass.
 Wayward, fickle, is our mood,
 Hovering betwixt bad and good,
 Happier than brief-dated man,
 Living twenty times his span;
 Far less happy, for we have
 Help nor hope beyond the grave!
 Man awakes to joy or sorrow;
 Ours the sleep that knows no
 morrow.
 This is all that I can show —
 This is all that thou may'st
 know.

AY! and I taught thee the word
 and the spell
 To waken me here by the Fairies'
 Well.
 But thou hast loved the heron and
 hawk,
 More than to seek my haunted
 walk;
 And thou hast loved the lance and
 the sword,
 More than good text and holy
 word;
 And thou hast loved the deer to
 track,
 More than the lines and the letters
 black;
 And thou art a ranger of moss and
 wood,
 And scornest the nurture of gentle
 blood.

Thy craven fear my truth accused,
Thine idleness my trust abused;
He that draws to harbor late,
Must sleep without, or burst the gate,
There is a star for thee which
burned,
Its influence wanes, its course is
turned;
Valor and constancy alone
Can bring thee back the chance
that's flown.

WITHIN that awful volume lies
The mystery of mysteries!
Happiest they of human race,
To whom God has granted grace
To read, to fear, to hope, to
pray,
To lift the latch, and force the
way;
And better had they ne'er been
born,
Who read to doubt, or read to
scorn.

MANY a fathom dark and deep
I have laid the book to sleep;
Ethereal fires around it glow-
ing —
Ethereal music ever flowing —
The sacred pledge of Heaven
All things revere,
Each in his sphere,
Save man for whom 't was
given:
Lend thy hand, and thou shalt
spy
Things ne'er seen by mortal eye.

FEAREST thou to go with me?
Still it is free to thee
A peasant to dwell;
Thou may'st drive the dull steer,
And chase the king's deer
But nevermore come near
This haunted well.

Here lies the volume thou hast
boldly sought;
Touch it, and take it, 't will dearly
be bought.

RASH thy deed,
Mortal weed
To immortal flames applying;
Rasher trust
Has thing of dust,
On his own weak worth re-
lying:
Strip thee of such fences vain,
Strip, and prove thy luck again.

MORTAL warp and mortal woof
Cannot brook this charmed roof;
All that mortal art hath wrought
In our cell returns to nought.
The molten gold returns to clay,
The polished diamond melts
away;
All is altered, all is flown,
Nought stands fast but truth
alone.
Not for that thy quest give o'er:
Courage! prove thy chance once
more.

ALAS! alas!
Not ours the grace
These holy characters to trace:
Idle forms of painted air,
Not to us is given to share
The boon bestowed on Adam's
race.
With patience bide,
Heaven will provide
The fitting time, the fitting guide.

VII

TO THE SAME

THIS is the day when the fairy
kind
Sit weeping alone for their hope-
less lot,

And the wood-maiden sighs to the
sighing wind,
And the mermaiden weeps in her
crystal grot;
For this is a day that the deed was
wrought,
In which we have neither part nor
share,
For the children of clay was salva-
tion bought,
But not for the forms of sea or
air!
And ever the mortal is most for-
lorn,
Who meeteth our race on the Fri-
day morn.

DARING youth! for thee it is
well,
Here calling me in haunted
dell,
That thy heart has not quailed,
Nor thy courage failed,
And that thou couldst brook
The angry look
Of Her of Avenel.
Did one limb shiver,
Or an eyelid quiver,
Thou wert lost forever.
Though I am form'd from the
ether blue,
And my blood is of the unfallen
dew,
And thou art framed of mud and
dust,
'T is thine to speak, reply I must.

A MIGHTIER wizzard far than I
Wields o'er the universe his
power;
Him owns the eagle in the
sky,
The turtle in the bower.
Changeful in shape, yet mighti-
est still,
He wields the heart of man at
will,

From ill to good, from good to
ill,
In cot and castle-tower.
Ask thy heart, whose secret
cell
Is filled with Mary Avenel!
Ask thy pride, why scornful
look
In Mary's view it will not
brook?
Ask it, why thou seek'st to rise
Among the mighty and the
wise,—
Why thou spurn'st thy lowly
lot,—
Why thy pastimes are for-
got,—
Why thou wouldst in bloody
strife
Mend thy luck or lose thy life?
Ask thy heart, and it shall
tell,
Sighing from its secret cell,
'T is for Mary Avenel.
Do not ask me;
On doubts like these thou
canst not task me.
We only see the passing show
Of human passions' ebb and
flow;
And view the pageant's idle
glance
As mortals eye the northern
dance,
When thousand streamers,
flashing bright,
Career it o'er the brow of
night,
And gazers mark their change-
ful gleams,
But feel no influence from
their beams.

By ties mysterious linked, our
fated race
Holds strange connection with the
sons of men.
The star that rose upon the House
of Avenel,

When Norman Ulric first assumed
the name,
That star, when culminating in its
orbit,
Shot from its spear a drop of dia-
mond dew,
And this bright font received it—
and a Spirit
Rose from the fountain, and her
date of life
Hath coexistence with the House
of Avenel,
And with the star that rules it.

LOOK on my girdle—on this thread
of gold—
'T is fine as web of lightest gossa-
mer,
And, but there is a spell on 't,
would not bind,
Light as they are, the folds of my
thin robe.
But when 't was donned, it was a
massive chain,
Such as might bind the champion
of the Jews,
Even when his locks were longest
— it hath dwindled,
Hath 'minished in its substance
and its strength,
As sunk the greatness of the
House of Avenel.
When this frail thread gives way,
I to the elements
Resign the principles of life they
lent me.
Ask me no more of this!— the
stars forbid it.
Dim burns the once bright star of
Avenel,
Dim as the beacon when the morn
is nigh,
And the o'er-wearied warder leaves
the lighthouse;
There is an influence sorrowful
and fearful,
That dogs its downward course.
Disastrous passion,

Fierce hate and rivalry, are in the
aspect
That lowers upon its fortunes.

COMPLAIN not on me, child of
clay,
If to thy harm I yield the way.
We, who soar thy sphere above,
Know not aught of hate or love;
As will or wisdom rules thy
mood,
My gifts to evil turn or good.
When Piercie Shafton boasteth
high,
Let this token meet his eye.
The sun is westering from the
dell,
Thy wish is granted— fare thee
well!

VIII

TO THE SAME

HE, whose heart for vengeance
sued,
Must not shrink from shedding
blood;
The knot that thou hast tied with
word,
Thou must loose by edge of sword.

YOU have summoned me once, you
have summoned me twice,
And without e'er a summons I
come to you thrice;
Unasked for, unsued for, you came
to my glen,
Unsued and unasked, I am with
you again.

IX

TO MARY AVENEL

MAIDEN, whose sorrows wail the
Living Dead,
Whose eyes shall commune with
the Dead Alive,

Maiden, attend ! Beneath my foot
lies hid

The Word, the Law, the Path
which thou dost strive
To find, and canst not find. Could
Spirits shed

Tears for their lot, it were my
lot to weep,
Showing the road which I shall
never tread,

Though my foot points it. Sleep,
eternal sleep
Dark, long, and cold forgetfulness
my lot !

But do not thou at human ills
repine ;
Secure there lies full guerdon in
this spot

For all the woes that wait frail
Adam's line —
Stoop then and make it yours, —
I may not make it mine !

X

TO EDWARD GLENDINNING

THOU who seek'st my fountain
lone,
With thoughts and hopes thou
dar'st not own ;
Whose heart within leaped wildly
glad,

When most his brow seemed dark
and sad ;
Hie thee back, thou find'st not
here

Corpse or coffin, grave or bier ;
The Dead Alive is gone and fled :
Go thou and join the Living
Dead !

The Living Dead, whose sober
brow
Oft shrouds such thoughts as thou
hast now
Whose hearts within are seldom
cured
Of passions by their vows ab-
jured ;

Where, under sad and solemn
show,

Vain hopes are nursed, wild wishes
glow.

Seek the convent's vaulted room,
Prayer and vigil be thy doom ;
Doff the green, and don the grey,
To the cloister hence away !

XI

THE WHITE LADY'S FAREWELL

FARE thee well, thou Holly green !
Thou shalt seldom now be seen,
With all thy glittering garlands
bending,
As to greet my slow descend-
ing,
Startling the bewildered hind,
Who sees thee wave without a
wind.

Farewell, Fountain ! now not long
Shalt thou murmur to my song.
While thy crystal bubbles glan-
cing,
Keep the time in mystic dan-
cing,
Rise and swell, are burst and lost,
Like mortal schemes by fortune
crossed.

The knot of fate at length is tied,
The Churl is Lord, the Maid is
Bride !

Vainly did my magic sleight
Send the lover from her sight ;
Wither bush, and perish well,
Fallen is lofty Avenel !

GOLDTHRED'S SONG

FROM KENILWORTH

Of all the birds on bush or
tree,
Commend me to the owl,

Since he may best ensample be
To those the cup that trowl.
For when the sun hath left the
west,
He chooses the tree that he loves
the best,
And he whoops out his song, and
he laughs at his jest;
Then though hours be late, and
weather foul,
We'll drink to the health of the
bonny, bonny owl.

The lark is but a bumpkin fowl,
He sleeps in his nest till
morn;
But my blessing upon the jolly
owl,
That all night blows his horn.
Then up with your cup till you
stagger in speech,
And match me this catch though
you swagger and screech,
And drink till you wink, my merry
men each;
For though hours be late, and
weather be foul,
We'll drink to the health of the
bonny, bonny owl.

VERSES FROM THE PIRATE

I

THE SONG OF THE TEMPEST

STERN eagle of the far north-
west,
Thou that bearest in thy grasp the
thunderbolt,
Thou whose rushing pinions stir
ocean to madness,
Thou the destroyer of herds, thou
the scatterer of navies,
Thou the breaker down of tow-
ers,
Amidst the scream of thy rage,

Amidst the rushing of thy onward
wings,
Though thy scream be loud as the
cry of a perishing nation,
Though the rushing of thy wings
be like the roar of ten thou-
sand waves,
Yet hear, in thine ire and thy
haste,
Hear thou the voice of the Reim-
kennar.

2

Thou hast met the pine-trees of
Drontheim,
Their dark-green heads lie pros-
trate beside their uprooted
stems;
Thou hast met the rider of the
ocean,
The tall, the strong bark of the
fearless rover,
And she has struck to thee the
topsail
That she had not veiled to a royal
armada;
Thou hast met the tower that
bears its crest among the
clouds,
The battled massive tower of the
Jarl of former days,
And the copestone of the turret
Is lying upon its hospitable
hearth;
But thou too shalt stoop, proud
compeller of clouds,
When thou hearest the voice of
the Reim-kennar.

3

There are verses that can stop the
stag in the forest,
Ay, and when the dark-colored dog
is opening on his track;
There are verses can make the
wild hawk pause on his wing,
Like the falcon that wears the
hood and the jesses,
And who knows the shrill whistle
of the fowler.

Thou who canst mock at the
scream of the drowning mar-
iner,
And the crash of the ravaged
forest,
And the groan of the overwhelmed
crowds,
When the church hath fallen in
the moment of prayer;
There are sounds which thou also
must list,
When they are chanted by the
voice of the Reim-kennar.

4

Enough of woe hast thou wrought
on the ocean,
The widows wring their hands on
the beach;
Enough of woe hast thou wrought
on the land,
The husbandman folds his arms
in despair;
Cease thou the waving of thy pin-
ions,
Let the ocean repose in her dark
strength;
Cease thou the flashing of thine
eye,
Let the thunderbolt sleep in the
armory of Odin;
Be thou still at my bidding, view-
less racer of the northwestern
heaven,—
Sleep thou at the voice of Norna
the Reim-kennar.

5

Eagle of the far northwestern wa-
ters,
Thou hast heard the voice of the
Reim-kennar,
Thou hast closed thy wide sails at
her bidding,
And folded them in peace by thy
side.
My blessing be on thy retiring
path;

When thou stoopest from thy
place on high,
Soft be thy slumbers in the caverns
of the unknown ocean,
Rest till destiny shall again
awaken thee;
Eagle of the northwest, thou hast
heard the voice of the Reim-
kennar.

II

HALCRO'S SONG

FAREWELL to Northmaven,
Grey Hillswicke, farewell!
To the calms of thy haven,
The storms on thy fell —
To each breeze that can vary
The mood of thy main,
And to thee, bonny Mary!
We meet not again!

Farewell the wild ferry,
Which Hacon could brave
When the peaks of the Skerry
Were white in the wave.
There's a maid may look over
These wild waves in vain
For the skiff of her lover —
He comes not again!

The vows thou hast broke,
On the wild currents fling them
On the quicksand and rock
Let the mermaiden sing them:
New sweetness they'll give her
Bewildering strain;
But there's one who will never
Believe them again.

O, were there an island,
Though ever so wild,
Where woman could smile, and
No man be beguiled —
Too tempting a snare
To poor mortals were given;
And the hope would fix there
That should anchor on heaven.

III

SONG OF HAROLD HARFAGER

THE sun is rising dimly red,
The wind is wailing low and
dread;

From his cliff the eagle sallies,
Leaves the wolf his darksome
valleys;

In the mist the ravens hover,
Peep the wild dogs from the
cover,

Screaming, croaking, baying, yell-
ing,

Each in his wild accents telling,
'Soon we feast on dead and dy-
ing,

Fair-haired Harold's flag is flying.'

Many a crest in air is streaming,
Many a helmet darkly gleaming,
Many an arm the axe uprears,
Doomed to hew the wood of
spears.

All along the crowded ranks,
Horses neigh and armor clanks;
Chiefs are shouting, clarions ring-
ing,

Louder still the bard is singing,
'Gather, footmen; gather, horse-
men,

To the field, ye valiant Norse-
men!

'Halt ye not for food or slumber,
View not vantage, count not num-
ber;

Jolly reapers, forward still,
Grow the crop on vale or hill,
Thick or scattered, stiff or lithe,
It shall down before the scythe.
Forward with your sickles bright,
Reap the harvest of the fight.

Onward footmen, onward horse-
men,

To the charge, ye gallant Norse-
men!

'Fatal Choosers of the Slaughter,
O'er you hovers Odin's daughter;

Hear the choice she spreads be-
fore ye —

Victory, and wealth, and glory;
Or old Valhalla's roaring hail,
Her ever-circling mead and ale,
Where for eternity unite
The joys of wassail and of fight.
Headlong forward, foot and horse-
men,

Charge and fight, and die like
Norsemen!'

IV

SONG OF THE MERMAIDS AND
MERMEN

MERMAID

FATHOMS deep beneath the wave,
Stringing beads of glistening
pearl,

Singing the achievements brave
Of many an old Norwegian earl;
Dwelling where the tempest's rav-
ing

Falls as light upon our ear,
As the sigh of lover, craving
Pity from his lady dear,
Children of wild Thule, we,
From the deep caves of the sea,
As the lark springs from the
lea,

Hither come, to share your glee.

MERMAN

From reining of the water-horse,
That bounded till the waves
were foaming,

Watching the infant tempest's
course,

Chasing the sea-snake in his
roaming;

From winding charge-notes on the
shell,

When the huge whale and
sword-fish duel,

Or tolling shroudless seamen's
knell,

When the winds and waves are
cruel;

Children of wild Thule, we
 Have ploughed such furrows on
 the sea,
 As the steer draws on the lea,
 And hither we come to share your
 glee.

MERMAIDS AND MERMEN

We heard you in our twilight
 caves,

A hundred fathom deep below
 For notes of joy can pierce the
 waves,

That drown each sound of war
 and woe.

Those who dwell beneath the sea
 Love the sons of Thule well;
 Thus, to aid your mirth, bring
 we

Dance and song and sounding
 shell.

Children of the dark Thule, know,
 Those who dwell by haaf and
 voe,

Where your daring shallops row,
 Come to share the festal show.

V

NORNA'S VERSES

FOR leagues along the watery
 way,

Through gulf and stream my
 course has been;

The billows know my Runic lay,
 And smooth their crests to silent
 green.

The billows know my Runic lay,
 The gulf grows smooth, the
 stream is still;

But human hearts, more wild than
 they,

Know but the rule of wayward
 will.

One hour is mine, in all the year,
 To tell my woes, and one alone ;

When gleams this magic lamp,
 't is here,
 When dies the mystic light, 't is
 gone.

Daughters of northern Magnus,
 hail !

The lamp is lit, the flame is
 clear;

To you I come to tell my tale,
 Awake, arise, my tale to hear !

Dwellers of the mountain, rise,
 Trolld the powerful, Haims the
 wise !

Ye who taught weak woman's
 tongue

Words that sway the wise and
 strong,—

Ye who taught weak woman's
 hand

How to wield the magic wand,
 And wake the gales on Foulah's
 steep,

Or lull wild Sumburgh's waves to
 sleep !

Still are ye yet? Not yours the
 power

Ye knew in Odin's mightier hour.
 What are ye now but empty
 names,

Powerful Trolld, sagacious Haims,
 That, lightly spoken, and lightly
 heard,

Float on the air like thistle's
 beard ?

A thousand winters dark have
 flown,

Since o'er the threshold of my
 stone

A votaress passed, my power to
 own.

Visitor bold

Of the mansion of Trolld,

Maiden haughty of heart,

Who hast hither presumed,

Ungifted, undoomed,

Thou shalt not depart.
 The power thou dost covet
 O'er tempest and wave,
 Shall be thine, thou proud maid-
 en,
 By beach and by cave. —
 By stack, and by skerry, by noup,
 and by voe,
 By air, and by wick, and by helyer
 and gio,
 And by every wild shore which the
 northern winds know,
 And the northern tides lave.
 But though this shall be given
 thee, thou desperately brave,
 I doom thee that never the gift
 thou shalt have,
 Till thou reave thy life's giver
 Of the gift which he gave.

DARK are thy words, and severe,
 Thou dweller in stone;
 But trembling and fear
 To her are unknown,
 Who hath sought thee here,
 In thy dwelling lone.
 Comes what comes soever,
 The worst I can endure;
 Life is but a short fever,
 And Death is the cure.

VI

HALCRO AND NORNA

CLAUD HALCRO

MOTHER darksome, Mother
 dread,
 Dweller on the Fitful-head,
 Thou canst see what deeds are
 done
 Under the never-setting sun.
 Look through sleet, and look
 through frost,
 Look to Greenland's caves and
 coast, —
 By the iceberg is a sail
 Chasing of the swarthy whale;

Mother doubtful, Mother dread,
 Tell us, has the good ship sped?

NORNA

The thought of the aged is ever on
 gear,
 On his fishing, his furrow, his
 flock, and his steer;
 But thrive may his fishing, flock,
 furrow, and herd,
 While the aged for anguish shall
 tear his gray beard.

The ship, well-laden as bark need
 be,
 Lies deep in the furrow of the Ice-
 land sea;
 The breeze from Zetland blows
 fair and soft,
 And gaily the garland is fluttering
 aloft;
 Seven good fishes have spouted
 their last,
 And their jaw-bones are hanging
 to yard and mast:
 Two are for Lerwick, and two for
 Kirkwall,
 And three for Burgh-Westra, the
 choicest of all.

CLAUD HALCRO

Mother doubtful, Mother dread,
 Dweller of the Fitful-head,
 Thou hast conned full many a
 rhyme,
 That lives upon the surge of time:
 Tell me, shall my lays be sung,
 Like Hacon's of the golden tongue,
 Long after Halcro's dead and
 gone?
 Or, shall Hialtland's minstrel own
 One note to rival glorious John?

NORNA

The infant loves the rattle's noise;
 Age, double childhood, hath its
 toys;
 But different far the descant rings,
 As strikes a different hand the
 strings.

The eagle mounts the polar sky :
The Imber-goose, unskilled to fly,
Must be content to glide along,
Where seal and sea-dog list his
song.

CLAUD HALCRO

Be mine the Imber-goose to play,
And haunt lone cave and silent
bay ;

The archer's aim so shall I shun ;
So shall I 'scape the levelled gun ;
Content my verses' tuneless jin-
gle,

With Thule's sounding tides to
mingle,

While, to the ear of wondering
wight,

Upon the distant headland's
height,

Softened by murmur of the sea,
The rude sounds seem like har-
mony !

Mother doubtful, Mother dread,
Dweller of the Fitful-head,
A gallant bark from far abroad,
Saint Magnus hath her in his road,
With guns and firelocks not a
few ;

A silken and a scarlet crew,
Deep stored with precious mer-
chandise,

Of gold, and goods of rare device :
What interest hath our comrade
bold

In bark and crew, in goods and
gold ?

NORNA

Gold is ruddy, fair, and free,
Blood is crimson, and dark to
see ;

I looked out on Saint Magnus
bay,

And I saw a falcon that struck
her prey ;

A goblet of flesh in her beak she
bore,

And talons and singles are drip-
ing with gore ;

Let him that asks after them look
on his hand,
And if there is blood on't, he's
one of their band.

CLAUD HALCRO

Mother doubtful, Mother dread,
Dweller of the Fitful-head,
Well thou know'st it is thy task
To tell what Beauty will not
ask ;

Then steep thy words in wine and
milk,

And weave a doom of gold and
silk ;

For we would know, shall Brenda
prove

In love, and happy in her love ?

NORNA

Untouched by love, the maiden's
breast

Is like the snow on Rona's crest,
High seated in the middle sky,

In bright and barren purity ;
But by the sunbeam gently kissed,

Scarce by the gazing eye 'tis
missed,

Ere, down the lonely valley steal-
ing,

Fresh grass and growth its course
revealing,

It cheers the flock, revives the
flower,

And decks some happy shepherd's
bower.

MAGNUS TROIL

Mother, speak, and do not tarry,
Here 's a maiden fain would
marry.

Shall she marry, ay or not ?

If she marry, what 's her lot ?

NORNA

Untouched by love, the maiden's
breast

Is like the snow on Rona's crest ;
So pure, so free from earthly dye,

It seems, whilst leaning on the
sky,

Part of the heaven to which 't is
nigh ;
But passion, like the wild March
rain,
May soil the wreath with many a
stain.
We gaze — the lovely vision 's
gone :
A torrent fills the bed of stone,
That, hurrying to destruction's
shock,
Leaps headlong from the lofty
rock.

VII

THE FISHERMEN'S SONG

FAREWELL, merry maidens, to
song and to laugh,
For the brave lads of Westra are
bound to the Haaf ;
And we must have labor, and hun-
ger, and pain,
Ere we dance with the maids of
Dunrossness again.

For now, in our trim boats of Noro-
way deal,
We must dance on the waves, with
the porpoise and seal ;
The breeze it shall pipe, so it pipe
not too high,
And the gull be our songstress
whene'er she flits by.

Sing on, my brave bird, while we
follow, like thee,
By bank, shoal, and quicksand, the
swarms of the sea ;
And when twenty-score fishes are
straining our line,
Sing louder, brave bird, for their
spoils shall be thine.

We 'll sing while we bait, and we 'll
sing when we haul,
For the deeps of the Haaf have
enough for us all ;

There is torsk for the gentle, and
skate for the carle,
And there 's wealth for bold Mag-
nus, the son of the earl.

Huzza ! my brave comrades, give
way for the Haaf,
We shall sooner come back to the
dance and the laugh ;
For life without mirth is a lamp
without oil ;
Then, mirth and long life to the
bold Magnus Troil !

VIII

CLEVELAND'S SONGS

LOVE wakes and weeps
While beauty sleeps :
O, for Music's softest numbers,
To prompt a theme
For Beauty's dream,
Soft as the pillow of her slumbers.

Through groves of palm
Sigh gales of balm,
Fire-flies on the air are wheeling ;
While through the gloom
Comes soft perfume,
The distant beds of flowers re-
vealing.

O wake and live !
No dream can give
A shadowed bliss, the real excel-
ling ;
No longer sleep,
From lattice peep,
And list the tale that Love is tell-
ing.

FAREWELL ! farewell ! the voice
you hear,
Has left its last soft tone with
you, —
Its next must join the seaward
cheer,
And shout among the shouting
crew.

The accents which I scarce could
form

Beneath your frown's controlling
check

Must give the word, above the
storm,

To cut the mast and clear the
wreck.

The timid eye I dared not raise, —
The hand, that shook when
pressed to thine,

Must point the guns upon the
chase —

Must bid the deadly cutlass
shine.

To all I love, or hope, or fear, —
Honor or own, a long adieu !

To all that life has soft and dear,
Farewell ! save memory of you !

IX

HALCRO'S VERSES

AND you shall deal the funeral
dole ;

Ay, deal it, mother mine,
To weary body and to heavy soul,
The white bread and the wine.

And you shall deal my horses of
pride ;

Ay, deal them, mother mine ;
And you shall deal my lands so
wide,
And deal my castles nine ;

But deal not vengeance for the
deed,

And deal not for the crime ;
The body to its place, and the soul
to Heaven's grace,
And the rest in God's own time.

SAINT Magnus control thee, that
martyr of treason ;

Saint Ronan rebuke thee, with
rhyme and with reason ;

By the mass of Saint Martin, the
might of Saint Mary,
Be thou gone, or thy weird shall
be worse if thou tarry !

If of good, go hence and hallow
thee ;

If of ill, let the earth swallow
thee ; —

If thou'rt of air, let the grey mist
fold thee ;

If of earth, let the swart mine hold
thee ;

If a Pixie, seek thy ring ;

If a Nixie, seek thy spring ;

If on middle earth thou'st been
Slave of sorrow, shame, and sin,
Hast ate the bread of toil and
strife,

And dree'd the lot which men call
life ;

Begone to thy stone ! for thy coffin
is scant of thee,

The worm, thy playfellow, wails
for the want of thee :

Hence, houseless ghost ! let the
earth hide thee,

Till Michael shall blow the blast,
see that there thou bide thee !

Phantom, fly hence ! take the Cross
for a token,

Hence pass till Hallowmass ! —
my spell is spoken.

WHERE corpse-light

Dances bright,

Be it by day or night,

Be it by light or dark,

There shall corpse lie stiff and
stark.

MENSEFUL maiden ne'er should
rise,

Till the first beam tinge the skies ;
Silk-fringed eyelids still should
close,

Till the sun has kissed the rose ;
Maiden's foot we should not view,

Marked with tiny print on dew,
Till the opening flowerets spread
Carpet meet for beauty's tread.

X

NORNA'S INCANTATIONS

CHAMPION, famed for warlike toil,
Art thou silent, Ribolt Troil?
Sand, and dust, and pebbly stones,
Are leaving bare thy giant bones.
Who dared touch the wild bear's
skin

Ye slumbered on, while life was
in?

A woman now, or babe, may come
And cast the covering from thy
tomb.

Yet be not wrathful, Chief, nor
blight

Mine eyes or ears with sound or
sight!

I come not with unhallowed tread,
To wake the slumbers of the dead,
Or lay thy giant relics bare;
But what I seek thou well canst
spare.

Be it to my hand allowed
To shear a merk's weight from thy
shroud;

Yet leave thee sheeted lead enough
To shield thy bones from weather
rough.

See, I draw my magic knife:
Never while thou wert in life
Laidst thou still for sloth or fear,
When point and edge were glitter-
ing near:

See, the cerements now I sever:
Waken now, or sleep forever!
Thou wilt not wake: the deed is
done!

The prize I sought is fairly won.

Thanks, Ribolt, thanks, — for this
the sea

Shall smooth its ruffled crest for
thee,

And while afar its billows foam,
Subside to peace near Ribolt's
tomb.

Thanks, Ribolt, thanks — for this
the might

Of wild winds raging at their
height,

When to thy place of slumber
nigh,

Shall soften to a lullaby.

She, the dame of doubt and dread,
Norna of the Fitful-head,
Mighty in her own despite,
Miserable in her might;
In despair and frenzy great,
In her greatness desolate;
Wiseest, wickedest who lives,
Well can keep the word she gives.

XI

THE SAME, AT THE MEETING
WITH MINNA

THOU, so needful, yet so dread,
With cloudy crest, and wing of
red;

Thou, without whose genial breath
The North would sleep the sleep
of death;

Who deign'st to warm the cottage
hearth,

Yet hurls proud palaces to earth;
Brightest, keenest of the Pow-
ers,

Which form and rule this world of
ours,

With my rhyme of Runic, I
Thank thee for thy agency.

OLD Reim-kennar, to thy art
Mother Hertha sends her part:
She, whose gracious bounty gives
Needful food for all that lives.
From the deep mine of the North
Came the mystic metal forth,
Doomed amidst disjointed stones
Long to cere a champion's bones,

Disinhumed my charms to aid:
Mother Earth, my thanks are paid.

GIRDLE of our islands dear,
Element of Water, hear!
Thou whose power can overwhelm
Broken mounds and ruined realm
On the lowly Belgian strand;
All thy fiercest rage can never
Of our soil a furlong sever
From our rock-defended land;
Play then gently thou thy part,
To assist old Norna's art.

ELEMENTS, each other greeting,
Gifts and powers attend your
meeting!

THOU, that over billows dark
Safely send'st the fisher's bark:
Giving him a path and motion
Through the wilderness of ocean;
Thou, that when the billows brave
ye,
O'er the shelves canst drive the
navy:
Did'st thou chafe as one neglected,
While thy brethren were re-
spected?
To appease thee, see, I tear
This full grasp of grizzled hair;
Oft thy breath hath through it
sung,
Softening to my magic tongue;
Now, 't is thine to bid it fly
Through the wide expanse of sky,
'Mid the countless swarms to sail
Of wild-fowl wheeling on thy gale;
Take thy portion and rejoice:
Spirit, thou hast heard my voice!

SHE who sits by haunted well,
Is subject to the Nixie's spell;
She who walks on lonely beach,
To the Mermaid's charmed speech;

She who walks round ring of green,
Offends the peevish Fairy Queen;
And she who takes rest in the
Dwarfie's cave,
A weary weird of woe shall have.

By ring, by spring, by cave, by
shore,
Minna Troil has braved all this
and more;
And yet hath the root of her sor-
row and ill
A source that's more deep and
more mystical still.
Thou art within a demon's hold,
More wise than Heims, more
strong than Trolld;
No siren sings so sweet as he:
No fay springs lighter on the lea;
No elfin power hath half the art
To soothe, to move, to wring the
heart:
Life-blood from the cheek to drain,
Drench the eye, and dry the vein.
Maiden, ere we farther go,
Dost thou note me, ay or no?

MINNA

I mark thee, my mother, both
word, look, and sign;
Speak on with thy riddle — to read
it be mine.

NORNA

Mark me! for the word I speak
Shall bring the color to thy cheek.
This leaden heart, so light of cost,
The symbol of a treasure lost,
Thou shalt wear in hope and in
peace,
That the cause of your sickness
and sorrow may cease,
When crimson foot meets crimson
hand
In the Martyrs' Aisle, and in Ork-
ney land.
Be patient, be patient, for Patience
hath power
To ward us in danger, like mantle
in shower;
A fairy gift you best may hold

In a chain of fairy gold ;
 The chain and the gift are each a
 true token,
 That not without warrant old
 Norna hath spoken ;
 But thy nearest and dearest must
 never behold them,
 Till time shall accomplish the
 truths I have told them.

XII

BRYCE SNAILSFOOT'S ADVER-
TISEMENT

POOR sinners whom the snake de-
 ceives,
 Are fain to cover them with leaves.
 Zetland hath no leaves, 't is true,
 Because that trees are none, or
 few ;
 But we have flax and taits of
 woo',
 For linen cloth, and wadmaal blue ;
 And we have many of foreign
 knacks
 Of finer waft than woo' or flax.
 Ye gallanty Lambmas lads appear,
 And bring your Lambmas sisters
 here,
 Bryce Snailsfoot spares not cost
 or care,
 To pleasure every gentle pair.

'ON ETTRICK FOREST'S
MOUNTAINS DUN'

ON Ettrick Forest's mountains dun
 'T is blithe to hear the sportsman's
 gun,
 And seek the heath-frequenting
 brood
 Far through the noonday soli-
 tude ;
 By many a cairn and trenched
 mound
 Where chiefs of yore sleep lone
 and sound,

And springs where gray-haired
 shepherds tell
 That still the fairies love to dwell.

Along the silver streams of Tweed
 'T is blithe the mimic fly to lead,
 When to the hook the salmon
 springs,
 And the line whistles through the
 rings ;
 The boiling eddy see him try,
 Then dashing from the current
 high,
 Till watchful eye and cautious
 hand
 Have led his wasted strength to
 land.

'T is blithe along the midnight
 tide
 With stalwart arm the boat to
 guide ;
 On high the dazzling blaze to rear.
 And heedful plunge the barbed
 spear ;
 Rock, wood, and scaur, emerging
 bright,
 Fling on the stream their ruddy
 light,
 And from the bank our band ap-
 pears
 Like Genii armed with fiery spears.

'T is blithe at eve to tell the tale
 How we succeed and how we fail,
 Whether at Alwyn's lordly meal,
 Or lowlier board of Ashestiel ;
 While the gay tapers cheerly shine,
 Bickers the fire and flows the
 wine —
 Days free from thought and nights
 from care,
 My blessing on the Forest fair.

THE MAID OF ISLA

AIR — 'The Maid of Isla'

O MAID of Isla, from the cliff
 That looks on troubled wave and
 sky,

Dost thou not see yon little skiff
 Contend with ocean gallantly?
 Now beating 'gainst the breeze
 and surge,

And steeped her leeward deck
 in foam,
 Why does she war unequal urge?—
 O Isla's maid, she seeks her
 home.

O Isla's maid, yon sea-bird mark,
 Her white wing gleams through
 mist and spray
 Against the storm-cloud lowering
 dark,

As to the rock she wheels
 away;—
 Where clouds are dark and billows
 rave,
 Why to the shelter should she
 come

Of cliff, exposed to wind and
 wave?—

O maid of Isla, 't is her home!

As breeze and tide to yonder skiff,
 Thou'rt adverse to the suit I
 bring,

And cold as is yon wintry cliff
 Where sea-birds close their wea-
 ried wing.

Yet cold as rock, unkind as wave,
 Still, Isla's maid, to thee I come;
 For in thy love or in his grave
 Must Allan Vourich find his
 home.

FAREWELL TO THE MUSE

ENCHANTRESS, farewell, who so
 oft hast decoyed me
 At the close of the evening
 through woodlands to roam,
 Where the forester lated with won-
 der espied me

Explore the wild scenes he was
 quitting for home.

Farewell, and take with thee thy
 numbers wild speaking

The language alternate of rap-
 ture and woe:

O! none but some lover whose
 heart-strings are breaking
 The pang that I feel at our part-
 ing can know!

Each joy thou couldst double, and
 when there came sorrow
 Or pale disappointment to dark-
 en my way,

What voice was like thine, that
 could sing of to-morrow
 Till forgot in the strain was the
 grief of to-day!

But when friends drop around us
 in life's weary waning,
 The grief, Queen of Numbers,
 thou canst not assuage;
 Nor the gradual estrangement of
 those yet remaining,
 The languor of pain and the
 chillness of age.

'T was thou that once taught me in
 accents bewailing

To sing how a warrior lay
 stretched on the plain,
 And a maiden hung o'er him with
 aid unavailing,

And held to his lips the cold
 goblet in vain;

As vain thy enchantments, O
 Queen of wild Numbers,

To a bard when the reign of his
 fancy is o'er,

And the quick pulse of feeling in
 apathy slumbers—

Farewell, then, Enchantress;—
 I meet thee no more.

NIGEL'S INITIATION AT WHITEFRIARS

FROM 'THE FORTUNES OF
 NIGEL'

YOUR suppliant, by name
 Nigel Grahame,
 In fear of mishap
 From a shoulder-tap;
 And dreading a claw

From the talons of law,
That are sharper than briars;
His freedom to sue
And rescue by you;
Through weapon and wit,
From warrant and writ,
From bailiff's hand,
From tipstaff's wand,
Is come hither to Whitefriars.

By spigot and barrel,
By bilboe and buff;
Thou art sworn to the quarrel
Of the blades of the Huff.
For Whitefriars and its claims
To be champion or martyr,
And to fight for its dames
Like a Knight of the Garter.

FROM the touch of the tip,
From the blight of the war-
rant,
From the watchmen who skip
On the Harman Beck's errand,
From the bailiff's cramp speech,
That makes man a thrall,
I charm thee from each,
And I charm thee from all.
Thy freedom's complete
As a blade of the Huff,
To be cheated and cheat,
To be cuffed and to cuff;
To stride, swear, and swagger,
To drink till you stagger,
To stare and to stab,
And to brandish your dagger
In the cause of your drab;
To walk wool-ward in winter,
Drink brandy, and smoke,
And go *fresco* in summer
For want of a cloak;
To eke out your living
By the wag of your elbow,
By fulham and gourd,
And by baring of bilboe;
To live by your shifts,
And to swear by your honor

Are the freedom and gifts
Of which I am the donor.

'CARLE, NOW THE KING'S COME'

BEING NEW WORDS TO AN
AULD SPRING

PART FIRST

THE news has flown frae mouth
to mouth,
The North for ance has banged
the South;
The deil a Scotsman's die o'
drouth,
Carle, now the King's come!

CHORUS

Carle, now the King's come!
Carle, now the King's come!
Thou shalt dance, and I will sing,
Carle, now the King's come!

Auld England held him lang and
fast;
And Ireland had a joyfu' cast;
But Scotland's turn is come at
last:
Carle, now the King's come:

Auld Reekie, in her rokelay grey,
Thought never to have seen the
day;
He's been a weary time away—
But, Carle, now the King's come!

She's skirling frae the Castle-hill;
The Carline's voice is grown sae
shrill,
Ye'll hear her at the Canon-mill:
Carle, now the King's come!

'Up, bairns!' she cries, 'baith grit
and sma',
And husk ye for the weapon-
shaw!
Stand by me, and we'll bang them
a'—
Carle, now the King's come!

'Come from Newbattle's ancient
spires,
Bauld Lothian, with your knights
and squires,
And match the mettle of your
sires :
Carle, now the King's come !

'You're welcome hame, my Mon-
tagu !
Bring in your hand the young Buc-
cleuch ;
I'm missing some that I may rue ;
Carle, now the King's come !

'Come, Haddington, the kind and
gay,
You've graced my causeway mony
a day ;
I'll weep the cause if you should
stay :
Carle, now the King's come !

'Come, premier Duke, and carry
doun
Frae yonder craig his ancient
crown ;
It's had a lang sleep and a
soun' :
But, Carle, now the King's come !

'Come, Athole, from the hill and
wood,
Bring down your clansmen like a
cloud ;
Come, Morton, show the Douglas'
blood :
Carle, now the King's come !

'Come, Tweeddale, true as sword
to sheath ;
Come, Hopetoun, feared on fields
of death ;
Come, Clerk, and give your bugle
breath ;
Carle, now the King's come !

'Come, Wemyss, who modest merit
aids ;
Come, Rosebery, from Dalmeny
shades ;

Breadalbane, bring your belted
plaids ;
Carle, now the King's come !

'Come, stately Niddrie, auld and
true,
Girt with the sword that Minden
knew ;
We have o'er few such lairds as
you :
Carle, now the King's come !

'King Arthur's grown a common
crier,
He's heard in Fife and far Cantire :—
"Fie, lads, behold my crest of
fire !"
Carle, now the King's come !'

'Saint Abb roars out, "I see him
pass,
Between Tantallon and the Bass !"
Carlton, get out your keeking-glass,
Carle, now the King's come !'

The Carline stopped ; and, sure I
am,
For very glee had ta'en a dwam,
But Oman helped her to a dram.
Cogie, now the King's come !

CHORUS

Cogie, now the King's come !
Cogie, now the King's come !
I'se be fou', and ye's be toom,
Cogie, now the King's come !

PART SECOND

A HAWICK gill of mountain dew,
Heised up Auld Reekie's heart, I
trow,
It minded her of Waterloo :
Carle, now the King's come !

Again I heard her summons swell,
For, sic a dirdum and a yell,
It drowned Saint Giles's jowing
bell :
Carle, now the King's come !

'My trusty Provost, tried and tight,
Stand forward for the Good Town's right,
There's waur than you been made
a knight:

Carle, now the King's come!

'My reverend Clergy, look ye say
The best of thanksgivings ye
ha'e,

And warstle for a sunny day:

Carle, now the King's come!

'My Doctors, look that you agree,
Cure a' the town without a fee;
My Lawyers, dinna pike a plea:

Carle, now the King's come!

'Come forth each sturdy Burgh-
er's bairn,

That dints on wood or clanks on
airn,

That fires the o'en, or winds the
pirn:

Carle, now the King's come!

'Come forward with the Blanket
Blue,

Your sires were loyal men and
true,

As Scotland's foemen oft might
rue:

Carle, now the King's come!

'Scots downa loup, and rin and
rave,

We're steady folks and something
grave,

We'll keep the causeway firm and
brave:

Carle, now the King's come!

'Sir Thomas, thunder from your
rock,

Till Pentland dinnles wi' the
shock,

And lace wi' fire my snood o'
smoke:

Carle, now the King's come!

'Melville, bring out your bands of
blue,

A' Louden lads, baith stout and
true,

With Elcho, Hope, and Cockburn,
too:

Carle, now the King's come!

'And you, who on yon bluidy braes
Compelled the vanquished Des-
pot's praise,

Rank out, rank out, my gallant
Greys:

Carle, now the King's come!

'Cock of the North, my Huntly
bra',

Where are you with the Forty-twa?
Ah! wae's my heart that ye're
awa':

Carle, now the King's come!

'But yonder come my canty Celts,
With durk and pistols at their
belts,

Thank God, we've still some
plaids and kilts:

Carle, now the King's come!

'Lord, how the pibrochs groan and
yell!

Macdonell's ta'en the field himsell,
Macleod comes branking o'er the
fell:

Carle, now the King's come!

'Bend up your bow each Archer
spark,

For you're to guard him light and
dark;

Faith, lads, for ance ye've hit the
mark:

Carle, now the King's come!

'Young Errol, take the sword of
state,

The Sceptre, Panie-Morarchate;
Knight Mareschal, see ye clear
the gate:

Carle, now the King's come!

'Kind cummer, Leith, ye've been
mis-set,
But dinna be upon the fret:
Ye'se hae the handsel of him yet,
Carle, now the King's come!

'My daughters, come with een sae
blue,
Your garlands weave, your blos-
soms strew;
He ne'er saw fairer flowers than
you:
Carle, now the King's come!

'What shall we do for the pro-
pine:
We used to offer something fine,
But ne'er a groat's in pouch of
mine:
Carle, now the King's come!

'Deil care—for that I'se never
start,
We'll welcome him with Highland
heart;
Whate'er we have he's get a
part:
Carle, now the King's come!

'I'll show him mason-work this
day:
Nane of your bricks of Babel
clay,
But towers shall stand till Time's
away:
Carle, now the King's come!

'I'll show him wit, I'll show him
lair,
And gallant lads and lasses fair,
And what wad kind heart wish for
mair?
Carle, now the King's come!

'Step out, Sir John, of projects
rife,
Come win the thanks of an auld
wife,
And bring him health and length
of life:
Carle, now the King's come!'

THE BANNATYNE CLUB

ASSIST me, ye friends of Old Books
and Old Wine,
To sing in the praises of sage
Bannatyne,
Who left such a treasure of old
Scottish lore
As enables each age to print one
volume more.
One volume more, my friends,
one volume more,
We'll ransack old Banny for
one volume more.

And first, Allan Ramsay, was eager
to glean
From Bannatyne's *Hortus* his
bright Evergreen;
Two light little volumes—intended
for four—
Still leave us the task to print one
volume more.
One volume more, etc.

His ways were not ours, for he
cared not a pin
How much he left out or how much
he put in;
The truth of the reading he thought
was a bore,
So this accurate age calls for one
volume more.
One volume more, etc.

Correct and sagacious, then came
my Lord Hailes,
And weighed every letter in criti-
cal scales,
But left out some brief words
which the prudish abhor,
And castrated Banny in one vol-
ume more.
One volume more, my friends,
one volume more;
We'll restore Banny's man-
hood in one volume more.

John Pinkerton next, and I'm
truly concerned
I can't call that worthy so candid
as learned;

He railed at the plaid and blas-
phemed the claymore,
And set Scots by the ears in his
one volume more.

One volume more, my friends,
one volume more,
Celt and Goth shall be pleased
with one volume more.

As bitter as gall and as sharp as a
razor,
And feeding on herbs as a Neb-
uchadnezzar;
His diet too acid, his temper too
sour,

Little Ritson came out with his
two volumes more.
But one volume, my friends,
one volume more,
We'll dine on roast-beef and
print one volume more.

The stout Gothic yeditur, next on
the roll,
With his beard like a brush and as
black as a coal;
And honest Greysteel that was
true to the core,
Lent their hearts and their hands
each to one volume more.
One volume more, etc.

Since by these single champions
what wonders were done,
What may not be achieved by our
Thirty and One?
Law, Gospel, and Commerce, we
count in our corps,
And the Trade and the Press join
for one volume more.
One volume more, etc.

Ancient libels and contraband
books, I assure ye,
We'll print as secure from Ex-
chequer or Jury;
Then hear your Committee and let
them count o'er
The Chiels they intend in their
three volumes more.
Three volumes more, etc.

They'll produce you King Jamie,
the sapient and Sext,
And the Rob of Dumblane and her
Bishops come next;
One tome miscellaneous they'll
add to your store,
Resolving next year to print four
volumes more.
Four volumes more, my friends,
four volumes more;
Pay down your subscriptions
for four volumes more.

COUNTY GUY

AH! County Guy, the hour is nigh,
The sun has left the lea,
The orange flower perfumes the
bower,
The breeze is on the sea.
The lark his lay who thrilled all
day
Sits hushed his partner nigh;
Breeze, bird, and flower confess
the hour,
But where is County Guy?

The village maid steals through
the shade,
Her shepherd's suit to hear;
To beauty shy by lattice high
Sings high-born Cavalier.
The star of Love, all stars above,
Now reigns o'er earth and sky;
And high and low the influence
know —
But where is County Guy!

EPILOGUE

TO THE DRAMA FOUNDED ON
'SAINT RONAN'S WELL'

[Enter MEG DODDS, encircled by
a crowd of unruly boys, whom
a town's-officer is driving off.]

THAT's right, friend — drive the
gaitlings back,
And lend yon muckle ane a whack;

Your Embro' bairns are grown a
 pack,
 Sae proud and saucy,
 They scarce will let an auld wife
 walk
 Upon your causey.

I've seen the day they would been
 scaured
 Wi' the Tolbooth or wi' the Guard,
 Or maybe wud hae some regard
 For Jamie Laing—
 The Water-hole was right weel
 wared
 On sic a gang.

But whar's the gude Tolbooth
 gane now?
 Whar's the auld Claught, wi' red
 and blue?
 Whar's Jamie Laing? and whar's
 John Doo?
 And whar's the Weigh-house?
 Deil hae 't I see but what is
 new,
 Except the Playhouse!

Yoursells are changed frae head
 to heel,
 There's some that gar the cause-
 way reel
 With clashing hufe and rattling
 wheel,
 And horses canterin',
 Wha's fathers daundered hame
 as weel
 Wi' lass and lantern.

Mysell being in the public line,
 I look for howfs I kened lang
 syne,
 Whar gentles used to drink gude
 wine
 And eat cheap dinners;
 But deil a soul gangs there to dine
 Of saints or sinners!

Fortune's and Hunter's gane, alas!
 And Bayle's is lost in empty space;
 And now if folk would splice a
 brace

Or crack a bottle,
 They gang to a new-fangled place
 They ca' a Hottle.

The deevil hottle them for Meg!
 They are sae greedy and sae gleg,
 That if ye're served but wi' an
 egg—
 And that's puir picking—
 In comes a chiel and makes a
 leg,
 And charges chicken!

'And wha may ye be,' gin ye speer,
 'That brings your auld-warld
 clavers here?'
 Troth, if there's onybody near
 That kens the roads,
 I'll haud ye Burgundy to beer
 He kens Meg Dodds.

I came a piece frae west o' Cur-
 rie;
 And, since I see you're in a hurry,
 Your patience I'll nae langer
 worry,
 But be sae crouse
 As speak a word for ane Will
 Murray
 That keeps this house.

Plays are auld-fashioned things in
 truth,
 And ye've seen wonders mair un-
 couth;
 Yet actors shouldna suffer drouth
 Or want of dramock,
 Although they speak but wi' their
 mouth,
 Not wi' their stamock.

But ye take care of a' folk's
 pantry;
 And surely to hae stooden sen-
 try
 Ower this big house—that's far
 frae rent-free—
 For a lone sister,
 Is claims as gude's to be a ven-
 tri—
 How 'st ca'd—loquister.

Weel, sirs, gude'en, and have a care
The bairns mak fun o' Meg nae
mair;
For gin they do, she tells you fair
And without failzie,
As sure as ever ye sit there,
She'll tell the Bailie.

EPILOGUE

THE sages — for authority, pray,
look
Seneca's morals or the copy-
book —
The sages to disparage woman's
power,
Say beauty is a fair but fading
flower; —
I cannot tell — I've small philo-
sophy —
Yet if it fades it does not surely
die,
But, like the violet, when decayed
in bloom,
Survives through many a year in
rich perfume.
Witness our theme to-night; two
ages gone,
A third wanes fast, since Mary
filled the throne.
Brief was her bloom with scarce
one sunny day
'Twixt Pinkie's field and fatal
Fotheringay:
But when, while Scottish hearts
and blood you boast,
Shall sympathy with Mary's woes
be lost?
O'er Mary's memory the learned
quarrel,
By Mary's grave the poet plants
his laurel,
Time's echo, old tradition, makes
her name
The constant burden of his falter-
ing theme;
In each old hall his gray-haired
heralds tell
Of Mary's picture and of Mary's
cell,

And show — my fingers tingle at
the thought —
The loads of tapestry which that
poor queen wrought.
In vain did fate bestow a double
dower
Of every ill that waits on rank and
power,
Of every ill on beauty that at-
tends —
False ministers, false lovers, and
false friends.
Spite of three wedlocks so com-
pletely curst,
They rose in ill from bad to worse
and worst,
In spite of errors — I dare not say
more,
For Duncan Targe lays hand on
his claymore.
In spite of all, however humors
vary,
There is a talisman in that word
Mary,
That unto Scottish bosoms all and
some
Is found the genuine *open sesa-
mum!*
In history, ballad, poetry, or novel,
It charms alike the castle and the
hovel,
Even you — forgive me — who, de-
mure and shy,
Gorge not each bait nor stir at
every fly,
Must rise to this, else in her an-
cient reign
The Rose of Scotland has survived
in vain.

VERSES FROM RED-
GAUNTLET

I

A CATCH OF COWLEY'S ALTERED
FOR all our men were very very
merry,
And all our men were drinking:

There were two men of mine,
 Three men of thine,
 And three that belonged to old Sir
 Thom o' Lyne.
 As they went to the ferry, they
 were very very merry,
 And all our men were drink-
 ing.

Jack looked at the sun, and cried,
 Fire, fire, fire!
 Tom stabled his keffel in Birken-
 dale mire;
 Jem started a calf, and hallooed
 for a stag;
 Will mounted a gate-post instead
 of his nag:
 For all our men were very very
 merry,
 And all our men were drink-
 ing;
 There were two men of mine,
 Three men of thine,
 And three that belonged to old
 Sir Thom o' Lyne.
 As they went to the ferry, they
 were very very merry,
 For all our men were drinking.

II

'AS LORDS THEIR LABORERS'
 HIRE DELAY'

As lords their laborers' hire de-
 lay,
 Fate quits our toil with hopes to
 come,
 Which, if far short of present
 pay,
 Still owns a debt and names a
 sum.

Quit not the pledge, frail sufferer,
 then,
 Although a distant date be given;
 Despair is treason towards man,
 And blasphemy to Heaven.

LINES

ADDRESSED TO MONSIEUR AL-
 EXANDRE THE CELEBRATED
 VENTRILOQUIST

OF yore, in old England, it was not
 thought good
 To carry two visages under one
 hood;
 What should folk say to *you*? who
 have faces such plenty,
 That from under one hood, you
 last night showed us twenty!
 Stand forth, arch-deceiver, and tell
 us in truth,
 Are you handsome or ugly, in age
 or in youth?
 Man, woman, or child — a dog or
 a mouse?
 Or are you, at once, each live
 thing in the house?
 Each live thing, did I ask? each
 dead implement, too,
 A work-shop in your person, —
 saw, chisel, and screw!
 Above all, are you one individual?
 I know
 You must be at least Alexandre
 and Co.
 But I think you're a troop, an
 assemblage, a mob,
 And that I, as the Sheriff, should
 take up the job;
 And instead of rehearsing your
 wonders in verse,
 Must read you the Riot-Act, and
 bid you disperse.
 ABBOTSFORD, 23d April.

TO J. G. LOCKHART, ESQ.

ON THE COMPOSITION OF
 MAIDA'S EPITAPH

DEAR JOHN, — I some time ago
 wrote to inform his
 Fat worship of *jaces*, misprinted
 for *dormis*;

But that several Southrons assured
me the *januam*
Was a twitch to both ears of Ass
Priscian's cranium.
You perhaps may observe that
one Lionel Berguer,
In defence of our blunder appears
a stout arguer.
But at length I have settled, I
hope, all these clatters,
By a *rowt* in the papers, fine place
for such matters.
I have therefore to make it for
once my command, sir,
That my gudeson shall leave the
whole thing in my hand, sir,
And by no means accomplish what
James says you threaten, —
Some banter in Blackwood to
claim your dog-Latin.
I have various reasons of weight,
on my word, sir,
For pronouncing a step of this
sort were absurd, sir.
Firstly, erudite sir, 't was against
your advising
I adopted the lines this monstrosity
lies in;
For you modestly hinted my Eng-
lish translation
Would become better far such a
dignified station.
Second, how, in God's name, would
my bacon be saved
By not having writ what I clearly
engraved?
On the contrary, I, on the whole,
think it better
To be whipped as the thief, than
his lousy resetter.
Thirdly, don't you perceive that I
don't care a boddle
Although fifty false metres were
flung at my noddle,
For my back is as broad and as
hard as Benlomon's,
And I treat as I please both the
Greeks and the Romans;
Whereas the said heathens might
rather look serious

At a kick on their drum from the
scribe of Valerius.
And, fourthly and lastly, it is my
good pleasure
To remain the sole source of that
murderous measure.
So, *stet pro ratione voluntas*, — be
tractile.
Invade not, I say, my own dear
little dactyl;
If you do, you'll occasion a breach
in our intercourse.
To-morrow will see me in town
for the winter-course,
But not at your door, at the usual
hour, sir,
My own pye-house daughter's
good prog to devour, sir.
Ergo, peace! — on your duty your
squeamishness throttle,
And we'll soothe Priscian's spleen
with a canny third bottle.
A fig for all dactyls, a fig for all
spondees,
A fig for all dunces and Dominie
Grundys;
A fig for dry thrapples, south,
north, east, and west, sir,
Speats and raxes ere five for a
famishing guest, sir;
And as Fatsman and I have some
topics for haver, he'll
Be invited, I hope, to meet me and
Dame Peveril,
Upon whom, to say nothing of Oury
and Anne, you a
Dog shall be deemed if you fasten
your *Janua*.

SONGS FROM THE BE-
TROTHERD

I

'SOLDIER, WAKE!'

SOLDIER, wake! the day is peep-
ing,
Honor ne'er was won in sleeping;

Never when the sunbeams still
Lay unreflected on the hill:
'Tis when they are glinted back
From axe and armor, spear and
jack,
That they promise future story
Many a page of deathless glory.
Shields that are the foeman's
terror,
Ever are the morning's mirror.

Arm and up! the morning beam
Hath called the rustic to his team,
Hath called the falc'ner to the
lake,
Hath called the huntsman to the
brake;
The early student ponders o'er
His dusty tomes of ancient lore.
Soldier, wake! thy harvest, fame;
Thy study, conquest; war, thy
game.
Shield, that would be foeman's
terror,
Still should gleam the morning's
mirror.

Poor hire repays the rustic's pain;
More paltry still the sportsman's
gain:
Vainest of all, the student's theme
Ends in some metaphysic dream:
Yet each is up, and each has toiled,
Since first the peep of dawn has
smiled:
And each is eagerer in his aim
Than he who barter's life for
fame.
Up, and arm thee, son of ter-
ror!
Be thy bright shield the morning's
mirror.

II

WOMAN'S FAITH

WOMAN'S faith, and woman's
trust:
Write the characters in dust,

Stamp them on the running stream.
Print them on the moon's pale
beam,
And each evanescent letter,
Shall be clearer, firmer, better,
And more permanent, I ween,
Than the things those letters mean.

I have strained the spider's thread
'Gainst the promise of a maid;
I have weighed a grain of sand
'Gainst her plight of heart and
hand;
I told my true love of the token,
How her faith proved light, and
her word was broken:
Again her word and truth she
plight,
And I believed them again ere
night.

III

'I ASKED OF MY HARP'

I ASKED of my harp, 'Who hath
injured thy chords?'
And she replied, 'The crooked
finger, which I mocked in my
tune.'
A blade of silver may be bended —
a blade of steel abideth:
Kindness fadeth away, but ven-
geance endureth.

The sweet taste of mead passeth
from the lips,
But they are long corroded by the
juice of wormwood;
The lamb is brought to the sham-
bles, but the wolf rangeth
the mountain;
Kindness fadeth away, but ven-
geance endureth.

I asked the red-hot iron, when it
glimmered on the anvil,
'Wherefore glowest thou longer
than the firebrand?'

'I was born in the dark mine, and
the brand in the pleasant
greenwood.'

Kindness fadeth away, but ven-
geance endureth.

I asked the green oak of the as-
sembly, wherefore its boughs
were dry and seared like the
horns of the stag?

And it showed me that a small
worm had gnawed its roots.

The boy who remembered the
scourge, undid the wicket of
the castle at midnight.

Kindness fadeth away, but ven-
geance endureth.

Lightning destroyeth temples,
though their spires pierce
the clouds;

Storms destroy armadas, though
their sails intercept the gale.

He that is in his glory falleth,
and that by a contemptible
enemy.

Kindness fadeth away, but ven-
geance endureth.

'WIDOWED WIFE AND WEDDED
MAID'

WIDOWED wife and wedded maid,
Betrothed, betrayer, and betrayed,
All is done that has been said;
Vanda's wrong hath been y-wro-
ken:

Take her pardon by this token.

VERSES FROM THE TALIS-
MAN

I

'DARK AHRIMAN, WHOM IRAK
STILL'

DARK Ahriman, whom Irak still
Holds origin of woe and ill!

When, bending at thy shrine,

We view the world with troubled
eye,

Where see we, 'neath the extended
sky,

An empire matching thine!

If the Benigner Power can yield
A fountain in the desert field,
Where weary pilgrims drink;
Thine are the waves that lash the
rock,

Thine the tornado's deadly shock,
Where countless navies sink!

Or if He bid the soil dispense
Balsams to cheer the sinking
sense,

How few can they deliver
From lingering pains, or pang in-
tense,

Red Fever, spotted Pestilence,
The arrows of thy quiver!

Chief in Man's bosom sits thy
sway,

And frequent, while in words we
pray

Before another throne,
Whate'er of specious form be
there,

The secret meaning of the prayer
Is, Ahriman, thine own.

Say, hast thou feeling, sense, and
form,

Thunder thy voice, thy garments
storm,

As Eastern Magi say;
With sentient soul of hate and
wrath,

And wings to sweep thy deadly
path,

And fangs to tear thy prey?

Or art thou mixed in Nature's
source,

An ever-operating force,
Converting good to ill;

An evil principle innate,
Contending with our better fate,

And oh! victorious still?

Howe'er it be, dispute is vain.
 On all without thou hold'st thy
 reign,
 Nor less on all within;
 Each mortal passion's fierce career,
 Love, hate, ambition, joy, and fear,
 Thou goadest into sin.

Whene'er a sunny gleam appears,
 To brighten up our vale of tears,
 Thou art not distant far;
 'Mid such brief solace of our lives,
 Thou whett'st our very banquet-knives
 To tools of death and war.

Thus, from the moment of our
 birth,
 Long as we linger on the earth,
 Thou rul'st the fate of men;
 Thine are the pangs of life's last
 hour,
 And — who dare answer? — is thy
 power,
 Dark Spirit! ended THEN?

II

'WHAT BRAVE CHIEF SHALL
 HEAD THE FORCES'

WHAT brave chief shall head the
 forces,
 Where the red-cross legions
 gather?
 Best of horsemen, best of horses,
 Highest head and fairest feather.

Ask not Austria why, 'midst
 princes,
 Still her banner rises highest;
 Ask as well the strong-winged
 eagle
 Why to heaven he soars the
 nighest.

III

THE BLOODY VEST

'T WAS near the fair city of Bene-
 vent,
 When the sun was setting on
 bough and bent,
 And knights were preparing in
 bower and tent,
 On the eve of the Baptist's tourna-
 ment;
 When in Lincoln green a stripling
 gent,
 Well seeming a page by a princess
 sent,
 Wandered the camp, and, still as
 he went,
 Inquired for the Englishman,
 Thomas à Kent.

Far hath he fared, and farther
 must fare,
 Till he finds his pavilion nor state-
 ly nor rare, —
 Little save iron and steel was
 there:
 And, as lacking the coin to pay
 armorer's care,
 With his sinewy arms to the
 shoulders bare,
 The good knight with hammer and
 file did repair
 The mail that to-morrow must see
 him wear,
 For the honor of Saint John and
 his lady fair.

'Thus speaks my lady,' the page
 said he,
 And the knight bent lowly both
 head and knee:
 'She is Benevent's Princess so
 high in degree,
 And thou art as lowly as knight
 may well be —
 He that would climb so lofty a
 tree,
 Or spring such a gulf as divides
 her from thee.

Must dare some high deed, by
which all men may see
His ambition is backed by his hie
chivalrie.

'Therefore thus speaks my lady,'
the fair page he said,
And the knight lowly louted with
hand and with head:
'Fling aside the good armor in
which thou art clad,
And don thou this weed of her
night-gear instead,
For a hauberk of steel, a kirtle of
thread:
And charge thus attired, in the
tournament dread,
And fight, as thy wont is, where
most blood is shed,
And bring honor away, or remain
with the dead.'

Untroubled in his look, and un-
troubled in his breast,
The knight the weed hath taken,
and reverently hath kissed:
'Now blessed be the moment, the
messenger be blest!
Much honored do I hold me in my
lady's high behest;
And say unto my lady, in this dear
night-weed dressed,
To the best armed champion I will
not veil my crest;
But if I live and bear me well, 't is
her turn to take the test.'
Here, gentles, ends the foremost
fytte of the Lay of the
Bloody Vest.

FYTTE SECOND

The Baptist's fair morrow beheld
gallant feats:
There was winning of honor, and
losing of seats:
There was hewing with falchions,
and splintering of staves,
The victors won glory, the van-
quished won graves.

Oh, many a knight there fought
bravely and well,
Yet one was accounted his peers
to excel,
And 't was he whose sole armor
on body and breast
Seemed the weed of a damsel when
bound for her rest.

There were some dealt him
wounds, that were bloody
and sore,
But others respected his plight,
and forebore.
'It is some oath of honor,' they
said, 'and I trow,
'T were unknighly to slay him
achieving his vow.'
Then the Prince, for his sake, bade
the tournament cease,
He flung down his warder, the
trumpets sung peace;
And the judges declare, and com-
petitors yield,
That the Knight of the Night-gear
was first in the field.

The feast it was nigh, and the
mass it was nigher,
When before the fair Princess low
louted a squire,
And delivered a garment unseemly
to view,
With sword-cut and spear-thrust,
all hacked and pierced
through:
All rent and all tattered, all clotted
with blood,
With foam of the horses, with dust,
and with mud;
Not the point of that lady's small
finger, I ween,
Could have rested on spot was un-
sullied and clean.

'This token my master, Sir
Thomas à Kent,
Restores to the Princess of fair
Benevent:
He that climbs the tall tree has
won right to the fruit,

He that leaps the wide gulf should
prevail in his suit;
Through life's utmost peril the
prize I have won,
And now must the faith of my
mistress be shown;
For she who prompts knights on
such danger to run,
Must avouch his true service in
front of the sun.

'I restore,' says my master, 'the
garment I've worn,
And I claim of the Princess to don
it in turn,
For its stains and its rents she
should prize it the more,
Since by shame 't is unsullied,
though crimsoned with gore.'
Then deep blushed the Princess,
yet kissed she and pressed
The blood-spotted robes to her lips
and her breast.
'Go tell my true knight, church
and chamber shall show
If I value the blood on this gar-
ment or no.'

And when it was time for the
nobles to pass,
In solemn procession to minster
and mass,
The first walked the Princess in
purple and pall,
But the blood-besmeared night-
robe she wore over all;
And eke, in the hall, where they
all sat at dine,
When she knelt to her father and
proffered the wine,
Over all her rich robes and state
jewels she wore
That wimple unseemly bedabbled
with gore.

Then lords whispered ladies, as
well you may thiuk,
And ladies replied, with nod, titter,
and wink:

And the Prince, who in anger and
shame had looked down,
Turned at length to his daughter,
and spoke with a frown:
'Now since thou hast published
thy folly and guilt,
E'en atone with thy hand for the
blood thou hast spilt;
Yet sore for your boldness you
both will repent,
When you wander as exiles from
fair Benevent.'

Then out spoke stout Thomas, in
hall where he stood,
Exhausted and feeble, but daunt-
less of mood;
'The blood that I lost for this
daughter of thine,
I poured forth as freely as flask
gives its wine:
And if for my sake she brooks
penance and blame,
Do not doubt I will save her from
suffering and shame;
And light will she reck of thy
princedom and rent,
When I hail her, in England, the
Countess of Kent.'

VERSES FROM WOODSTOCK

I

'BY PATHLESS MARCH, BY
GREENWOOD TREE'

By pathless march, by greenwood
tree,
It is thy weird to follow me:
To follow me through the ghastly
moonlight,
To follow me through the shadows
of night,
To follow me, comrade, still art
thou bound:
I conjure thee by the unstanched
wound,
I conjure thee by the last words I
spoke,

When the body slept and the
spirit awoke,
In the very last pangs of the
deadly stroke!

II

GLEE FOR KING CHARLES

BRING the bowl which you boast,
Fill it up to the brim;
'T is to him we love most,
And to all who love him.
Brave gallants, stand up,
And avaunt ye, base carles!
Were there death in the cup,
Here 's a health to King Charles!

Though he wanders through dan-
gers,
Unaided, unknown,
Dependent on strangers,
Estranged from his own;
Though 't is under our breath
Amidst forfeits and perils,
Here 's to honor and faith,
And a health to King Charles!

Let such honors abound,
As the time can afford,
The knee on the ground,
And the hand on the sword;
But the time shall come round
When, 'mid Lords, Dukes, and
Earls,
The loud trumpet shall sound,
Here 's a health to King Charles!

III

'AN HOUR WITH THEE'

AN hour with thee! When earli-
est day
Dapples with gold the eastern gray.
Oh, what can frame my mind to
bear
The toil and turmoil, cark and
care,

New griefs, which coming hours
unfold,
And sad remembrance of the old!
One hour with thee!

One hour with thee! When burn-
ing June
Waves his red flag at pitch of
noon;
What shall repay the faithful
swain,
His labor on the sultry plain;
And more than cave or sheltering
bough,
Cool feverish blood and throbbing
brow?
One hour with thee!

One hour with thee! When sun
is set,
Oh! what can teach me to forget
The thankless labors of the day;
The hopes, the wishes, flung away;
The increasing wants and lessen-
ing gains,
The master's pride who scorns my
pains? —
One hour with thee!

IV

'SON OF A WITCH'

SON of a witch,
Mayst thou die in a ditch,
With the butchers who back thy
quarrels;
And rot above ground,
While the world shall resound
A welcome to Royal King Charles.

LINES TO SIR CUTHBERT
SHARP

FORGET thee! No! my worthy
fere!
Forget blithe mirth and gallant
cheer!
Death sooner stretch me on my
bier!
Forget thee? No.

Forget the universal shout
When 'canny Sunderland' spoke
out:

A truth which knaves affect to
doubt:

Forget thee? No.

Forget you? No: though now-a-
day

I've heard your knowing people
say,

'Disown the debt you cannot pay,
You'll find it far the thriftiest
way'—

But I?—O no.

Forget your kindness found for all
room,

In what, though large, seemed
still a small room,

Forget my *Surtees* in a ball-room:
Forget you? No.

Forget your sprightly dumpty-
diddles,

And beauty tripping to the fid-
dles,

Forget my lovely friends the *Lid-
dells*;

Forget you? No.

VERSES FROM CHRONICLES OF THE CANON-GATE

I

OLD SONG FROM 'THE HIGHLAND WIDOW'

Oh, I'm come to the Low Coun-
try,

Och, och, ohonochie,
Without a penny in my pouch
To buy a meal for me.

I was the proudest of my clan,
Long, long may I repine;

And Donald was the bravest man,
And Donald he was mine.

II

THE LAY OF POOR LOUISE

FROM 'THE FAIR MAID OF PERTH'

AH, poor Louise! the livelong day
She roams from cot to castle gay;
And still her voice and viol say,
Ah, maids, beware the woodland
way,

Think on Louise.

Ah, poor Louise! The sun was
high,

It smirched her cheek, it dimmed
her eye,

The woodland walk was cool and
nigh,

Where birds with chiming stream-
lets vie

To cheer Louise.

Ah, poor Louise! The savage bear
Made ne'er that lovely grove his
lair;

The wolves molest not paths so
fair—

But better far had such been there
For poor Louise.

Ah, poor Louise! In woody wold
She met a huntsman fair and bold;
His baldrick was of silk and gold,
And many a witching tale he told
To poor Louise.

Ah, poor Louise! Small cause to
pine

Hadst thou for treasures of the
mine;

For peace of mind, that gift di-
vine,

And spotless innocence, were
thine,

Ah, poor Louise!

Ah, poor Louise! Thy treasure's
reft!

I know not if by force or theft,
Or part by violence, part by gift;
But misery is all that's left

To poor Louise.

Let poor Louise some succor have!
She will not long your bounty
crave,

Or tire the gay with warning
stave —

For heaven has grace, and earth a
grave,

For poor Louise.

III

DEATH CHANT

VIEWLESS Essence, thin and bare,
Well-nigh melted into air;
Still with fondness hovering near
The earthly form thou once didst
wear;

Pause upon thy pinion's flight,
Be thy course to left or right;
Be thou doomed to soar or sink,
Pause upon the awful brink.

To avenge the deed expelling
Thee untimely from thy dwell-
ing,

Mystic force thou shalt retain
O'er the blood and o'er the brain.

When the form thou shalt espy
That darkened on thy closing
eye;

When the footstep thou shalt hear
That thrilled upon thy dying ear;

Then strange sympathies shall
wake,

The flesh shall thrill, the nerves
shall quake;

The wounds renew their clotted
flood,

And every drop cry blood for blood.

IV

SONG OF THE GLEE-MAIDEN

Yes, thou mayst sigh,
And look once more at all around,
At stream and bank, and sky and
ground,
Thy life its final course has found,
And thou must die.

Yes, lay thee down,
And while thy struggling pulses
flutter,
Bid the grey monk his soul-mass
mutter,
And the deep bell its death-tone
utter:
Thy life is gone.

Be not afraid,
'T is but a pang, and then a thrill,
A fever fit, and then a chill;
And then an end of human ill:
For thou art dead.

THE DEATH OF KEELDAR

UP rose the sun o'er moor and
mead;

Up with the sun rose Percy
Rede;

Brave Keeldar, from his couples
freed,

Careered along the lea;
The Palfrey sprung with sprightly
bound,

As if to match the gamesome
hound;

His horn the gallant huntsman
wound:

They were a jovial three!

Man, hound, or horse, of higher
fame,

To wake the wild deer never
came

Since Alnwick's Earl pursued the
game

On Cheviot's rueful day :
 Keeldar was matchless in his
 speed,
 Than Tarras ne'er was stancher
 steed,
 A peerless archer, Percy Rede ;
 And right dear friends were
 they.

The chase engrossed their joys
 and woes,
 Together at the dawn they rose,
 Together shared the noon's re-
 pose

By fountain or by stream ;
 And oft when evening skies were
 red
 The heather was their common
 bed,
 Where each, as wildering fancy
 led,
 Still hunted in his dream.

Now is the thrilling moment near
 Of sylvan hope and sylvan fear ;
 Yon thicket holds the harbored
 deer,

The signs the hunters know :
 With eyes of flame and quivering
 ears
 The brake sagacious Keeldar
 nears ;
 The restless palfrey paws and
 rears ;
 The archer strings his bow.

The game's afoot! — Halloo! Hal-
 loo!

Hunter and horse and hound pur-
 sue ; —
 But woe the shaft that erring
 flew —

That e'er it left the string!
 And ill betide the faithless yew!
 The stag bounds scathless o'er the
 dew,
 And gallant Keeldar's life-blood
 true
 Has drenched the gray-goose
 wing.

The noble hound — he dies, he
 dies ;
 Death, death has glazed his fixed
 eyes ;
 Stiff on the bloody heath he lies
 Without a groan or quiver.
 Now day may break and bugle
 sound,
 And whoop and hollow ring
 around,
 And o'er his couch the stag may
 bound,
 But Keeldar sleeps forever.

Dilated nostrils, staring eyes,
 Mark the poor palfrey's mute sur-
 prise ;
 He knows not that his comrade
 dies,
 Nor what is death — but still
 His aspect hath expression drear
 Of grief and wonder mixed with
 fear,
 Like startled children when they
 hear
 Some mystic tale of ill.

But he that bent the fatal bow
 Can well the sum of evil know,
 And o'er his favorite bending
 low

In speechless grief recline ;
 Can think he hears the senseless
 clay

In unreproachful accents say,
 'The hand that took my life away,
 Dear master, was it thine?

'And if it be, the shaft be blessed
 Which sure some erring aim ad-
 dressed,
 Since in your service prized, ca-
 ressed,

I in your service die ;
 And you may have a fleeter hound
 To match the dun-deer's merry
 bound,
 But by your couch will ne'er be
 found
 So true a guard as I.'

And to his last stout Percy rued
The fatal chance, for when he
stood

'Gainst fearful odds in deadly feud
And fell amid the fray,
E'en with his dying voice he cried,
'Had Keeldar but been at my side,
Your treacherous ambush had
been spied —

I had not died to-day !'

Remembrance of the erring bow
Long since had joined the tides
which flow,

Conveying human bliss and woe
Down dark oblivion's river;
But Art can Time's stern doom
arrest

And snatch his spoil from Lethe's
breast,

And, in her Cooper's colors drest,
The scene shall live forever.

THE SECRET TRIBUNAL

FROM 'ANNE OF GEIERSTEIN'

MEASURERS of good and evil,
Bring the square, the line, the
level, —

Rear the altar, dig the trench,
Blood both stone and ditch shall
drench.

Cubits six, from end to end,
Must the fatal bench extend;
Cubits six, from side to side,
Judge and culprit must divide.
On the east the Court assembles,
On the west the Accused trem-
bles :

Answer, brethren, all and one,
Is the ritual rightly done?

ON life and soul, on blood and
bone,

One for all, and all for one,
We warrant this is rightly done.

How wears the night? Doth morn-
ing shine

In early radiance on the Rhine?
What music floats upon his tide?
Do birds the tardy morning chide?
Brethren, look out from hill and
height,
And answer true, how wears the
night?

THE night is old; on Rhine's broad
breast

Glance drowsy stars which long to
rest.

No beams are twinkling in the
east.

There is a voice upon the flood,
The stern still call of blood for
blood;

'T is time we listen the behest.

Up, then, up! When day's at rest,
'T is time that such as we are
watchers;

Rise to judgment, brethren, rise!
Vengeance knows not sleepy eyes,
He and night are matchers.

THE FORAY

THE last of our steers on the
board has been spread,

And the last flask of wine in our
goblet is red;

Up! up, my brave kinsmen! belt
swords and begone,

There are dangers to dare and
there's spoil to be won.

The eyes that so lately mixed
glances with ours

For a space must be dim, as they
gaze from the towers,

And strive to distinguish through
tempest and gloom

The prance of the steed and the
toss of the plume.

The rain is descending; the wind
rises loud;
And the moon her red beacon has
veiled with a cloud;
'T is the better, my mates! for the
warder's dull eye
Shall in confidence slumber nor
dream we are nigh.

Our steeds are impatient! I hear
my blithe Grey!
There is life in his hoof-clang and
hope in his neigh;
Like the flash of a meteor, the
glance of his mane
Shall marshal your march through
the darkness and rain.

The drawbridge has dropped, the
bugle has blown;
One pledge is to quaff yet—then
mount and begone!—
To their honor and peace that shall
rest with the slain;
To their health and their glee that
see Teviot again!

INSCRIPTION

FOR THE MONUMENT OF THE
REV. GEORGE SCOTT

To youth, to age, alike, this tablet
pale
Tells the brief moral of its tragic
tale.
Art thou a parent? Reverence
this bier,
The parents' fondest hopes lie
buried here.
Art thou a youth, prepared on life
to start,
With opening talents and a gener-
ous heart;
Fair hopes and flattering pro-
spects all thine own?
Lo! here their end—a monumental
stone.

But let submission tame each sor-
rowing thought,
Heaven crowned its champion ere
the fight was fought.

SONGS FROM THE DOOM OF DEVORGOIL

I

'THE SUN UPON THE LAKE'

THE sun upon the lake is low,
The wild birds hush their song,
The hills have evening's deepest
glow,
Yet Leonard tarries long.
Now all whom varied toil and care
From home and love divide,
In the calm sunset may repair
Each to the loved one's side.

The noble dame, on turret high
Who waits her gallant knight,
Looks to the western beam to spy
The flash of armor bright.
The village maid, with hand on
brow
The level ray to shade,
Upon the footpath watches now
For Colin's darkening plaid.

Now to their mates the wild swans
row,
By day they swam apart;
And to the thicket wanders slow
The hind beside the hart.
The woodlark at his partner's side
Twitters his closing song—
All meet whom day and care di-
vide,
But Leonard tarries long.

II

'WE LOVE THE SHRILL TRUM- PET'

WE love the shrill trumpet, we
love the drum's rattle,
They call us to sport, and they
call us to battle;

And old Scotland shall laugh at
the threats of a stranger,
While our comrades in pastime
are comrades in danger.

If there 's mirth in our house, 't is
our neighbor that shares it —
If peril approach, 'tis our neigh-
bor that dares it;
And when we lead off to the pipe
and the tabor,
The fair hand we press is the hand
of a neighbor.

Then close your ranks, comrades,
the bands that combine them,
Faith, friendship, and brotherhood,
join'd to entwine them;
And we 'll laugh at the threats of
each insolent stranger,
While our comrades in sport are
our comrades in danger.

III

'ADMIRE NOT THAT I GAINED'

ADMIRE not that I gained the
prize

From all the village crew;
How could I fail with hand or eyes
When heart and faith were true?

And when in floods of rosy wine
My comrades drowned their
cares,

I thought but that thy heart was
mine,

My own leapt light as theirs.

My brief delay then do not blame,
Nor deem your swain untrue;
My form but lingered at the game,
My soul was still with you.

IV

WHEN THE TEMPEST

WHEN the tempest's at the loud-
est
On its gale the eagle rides;

When the ocean rolls the proudest
Through the foam the sea-bird
glides —
All the rage of wind and sea
Is subdued by constancy.

Gnawing want and sickness pin-
ing,
All the ills that men endure,
Each their various pangs combin-
ing,

Constancy can find a cure —
Pain and Fear and Poverty
Are subdued by constancy.

Bar me from each wonted plea-
sure,

Make me abject, mean, and
poor,

Heap on insults without measure,
Chain me to a dungeon floor —
I 'll be happy, rich, and free,
If endowed with constancy.

V

BONNY DUNDEE

AIR — '*The Bonnets of Bonny Dundee*'

To the Lords of Convention 't was
Claver'se who spoke,

'Ere the King's crown shall fall
there are crowns to be broke;
So let each Cavalier who loves
honor and me,

Come follow the bonnet of Bonny
Dundee.

Come fill up my cup, come fill
up my can,

Come saddle your horses and
call up your men;

Come open the West Port and
let me gang free,

And it's room for the bonnets
of Bonny Dundee!

Dundee he is mounted, he rides up
the street,

The bells are rung backward, the
drums they are beat;

But the Provost, douce man, said,
 'Just e'en let him be,
 The Gude Town is weel quit of
 that Deil of Dundee.'
 Come fill up my cup, etc.

As he rode down the sanctified
 bends of the Bow,
 Ilk carline was flyting and shak-
 ing her pow;
 But the young plants of grace they
 looked couthie and slee,
 Thinking, luck to thy bonnet, thou
 Bonny Dundee!
 Come fill up my cup, etc.

With sour-featured Whigs the
 Grassmarket was crammed
 As if half the West had set tryst
 to be hanged;
 There was spite in each look, there
 was fear in each e'e,
 As they watched for the bonnets
 of Bonny Dundee.
 Come fill up my cup, etc.

These cowls of Kilmarnock had
 spits and had spears,
 And lang-hafted gullies to kill
 Cavaliers;
 But they shrunk to close-heads
 and the causeway was free,
 At the toss of the bonnet of Bonny
 Dundee.
 Come fill up my cup, etc.

He spurred to the foot of the proud
 Castle rock,
 And with the gay Gordon he gal-
 lantly spoke;
 'Let Mons Meg and her marrows
 speak twa words or three,
 For the love of the bonnet of Bonny
 Dundee.'
 Come fill up my cup, etc.

The Gordon demands of him which
 way he goes —
 'Where'er shall direct me the
 shade of Montrose!

Your Grace in short space shall
 hear tidings of me,
 Or that low lies the bonnet of
 Bonny Dundee.
 Come fill up my cup, etc.

'There are hills beyond Pentland
 and lands beyond Forth,
 If there 's lords in the Lowlands,
 there 's chiefs in the North;
 There are wild Duniewassals three
 thousand times three,
 Will cry *hoigh!* for the bonnet of
 Bonny Dundee.
 Come fill up my cup, etc.

'There 's brass on the target of
 barked bull-hide;
 There 's steel in the scabbard that
 dangles beside;
 The brass shall be burnished, the
 steel shall flash free,
 At a toss of the bonnet of Bonny
 Dundee.
 Come fill up my cup, etc.

'Away to the hills, to the caves, to
 the rocks —
 Ere I own an usurper, I'll couch
 with the fox;
 And tremble, false Whigs, in the
 midst of your glee,
 You have not seen the last of my
 bonnet and me!
 Come fill up my cup, etc.

He waved his proud hand and the
 trumpets were blown,
 The kettle-drums clashed, and the
 horsemen rode on,
 Till on Ravelston's cliffs and on
 Clermiston's lee
 Died away the wild war-notes of
 Bonny Dundee.
 Come fill up my cup, come fill
 up my can,
 Come saddle the horses and
 call up the men,

Come open your gates and let
me gae free,
For it's up with the bonnets
of Bonny Dundee!

VI

'WHEN FRIENDS ARE MET'

WHEN friends are met o'er merry
cheer,
And lovely eyes are laughing near,
And in the goblet's bosom clear
The cares of day are drowned;
When puns are made and bumpers
quaffed,
And wild Wit shoots his roving
shaft,
And Mirth his jovial laugh has
laughed,
Then is our banquet crowned,
Ah! gay,
Then is our banquet crowned.

When glees are sung and catches
trolled,
And bashfulness grows bright and
bold,
And beauty is no longer cold,
And age no longer dull;
When chimes are brief and cocks
do crow
To tell us it is time to go,
Yet how to part we do not know,
Then is our feast at full,
Ah! gay,
Then is our feast at full.

'HITHER WE COME'

HITHER we come,
Once slaves to the drum,
But no longer we list to its rattle;

Adieu to the wars,
With their slashes and scars,
The march, and the storm, and the
battle.

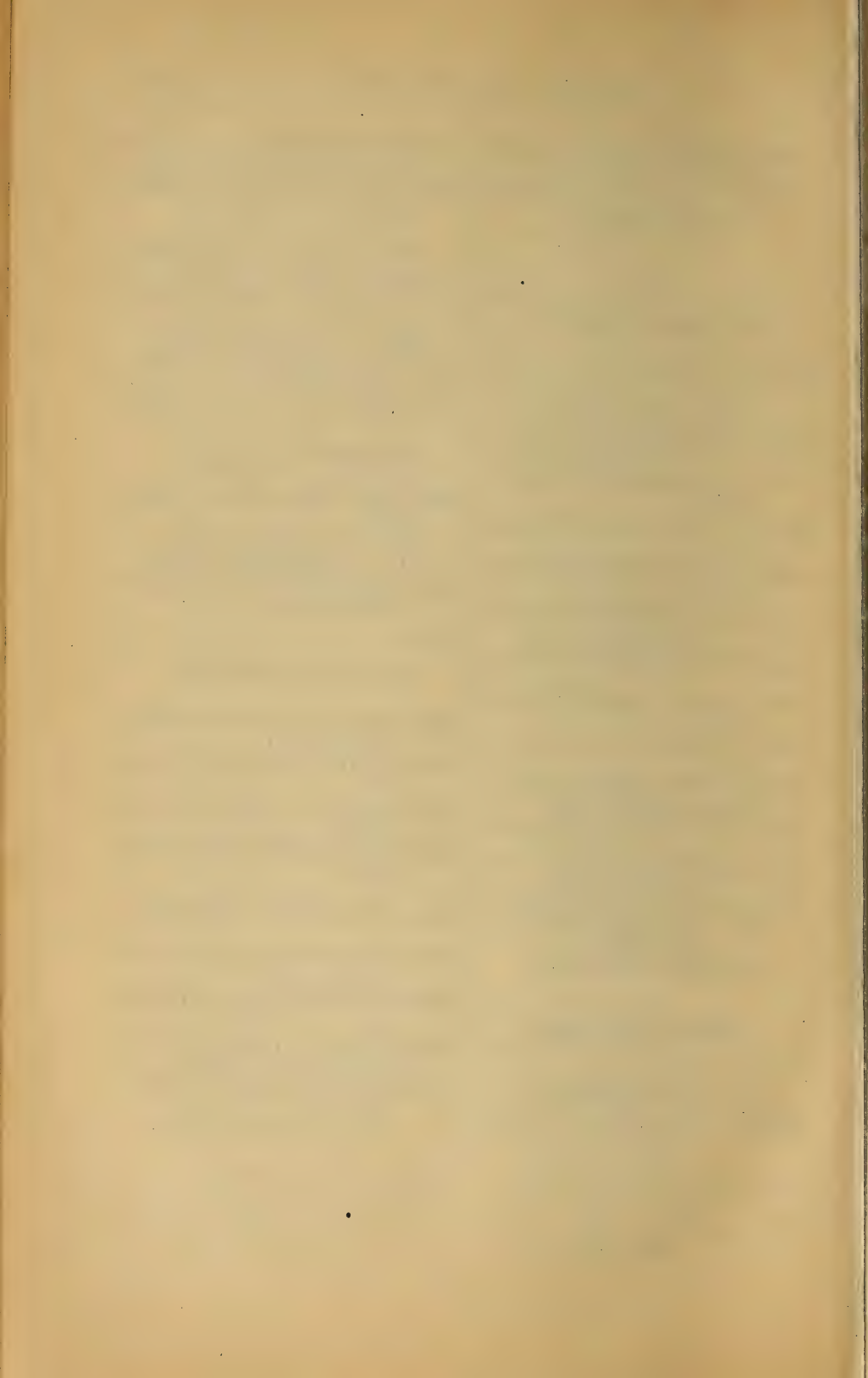
There are some of us maimed,
And some that are lamed,
And some of old aches are com-
plaining;
But we'll take up the tools
Which we flung by like fools,
'Gainst Don Spaniard to go a-cam-
paigning.

Dick Hathorn doth vow
To return to the plough,
Jack Steele to his anvil and ham-
mer;
The weaver shall find room
At the wight-wapping loom,
And your clerk shall teach writing
and grammar.

LINES ON FORTUNE

FORTUNE, my Foe, why dost thou
frown on me?
And will my Fortune never better
be?
Wilt thou, I say, forever breed my
pain?
And wilt thou ne'er return my joys
again?

No — let my ditty be henceforth —
Fortune, my friend, how well thou
favorest me!
A kinder Fortune man did never
see!
Thou propp'st my thigh, thou rid-
d'st my knee of pain,
I'll walk, I'll mount — I'll be a
man again. —



APPENDIX

I. JUVENILE LINES

FROM VIRGIL

[1782]

IN awful ruins Ætna thunders
nigh,
And sends in pitchy whirlwinds
to the sky
Black clouds of smoke, which, still
as they aspire,
From their dark sides there bursts
the glowing fire :
At other times huge balls of fire
are tossed,
That lick the stars, and in the
smoke are lost :
Sometimes the mount, with vast
convulsions torn,
Emits huge rocks, which instantly
are borne
With loud explosions to the starry
skies,
The stones made liquid as the
huge mass flies,
Then back again with greater
weight recoils,
While Ætna thundering from the
bottom boils.

ON A THUNDER-STORM

[1783]

LOUD o'er my head though awful
thunders roll,
And vivid lightnings flash from
pole to pole,
Yet 't is thy voice, my God, that
bids them fly,

Thy arm directs those lightnings
through the sky.
Then let the good thy mighty name
revere,
And hardened sinners thy just
vengeance fear.

ON THE SETTING SUN

[1783]

THOSE evening clouds, that setting
ray,
And beauteous tints, serve to dis-
play
Their great Creator's praise ;
Then let the short-lived thing
called man
Whose life's comprised within a
span,
To him his homage raise.

We often praise the evening
clouds,
And tints so gay and bold,
But seldom think upon our God,
Who tinged these clouds with
gold !

II. MOTTOES FROM THE NOVELS

FROM THE ANTIQUARY

I KNEW Anselmo. He was shrewd
and prudent,
Wisdom and cunning had their
shares of him ;
But he was shrewish as a wayward
child,

And pleased again by toys which
childhood please:
As book of fables graced with
print of wood,
Or else the jingling of a rusty
medal,
Or the rare melody of some old
ditty
That first was sung to please King
Pepin's cradle.

'BE brave,' she cried, 'you yet
may be our guest.
Our haunted room was ever held
the best:
If then your valor can the fight
sustain
Of rustling curtains and the clink-
ing chain,
If your courageous tongue have
powers to talk
When round your bed the horrid
ghost shall walk,
If you dare ask it why it leaves its
tomb,
I'll see your sheets well aired and
show the room.'

True Story.

SOMETIMES he thinks that Hea-
ven this vision sent,
And ordered all the pageants as
they went;
Sometimes that only 't was wild
Fancy's play,
The loose and scattered relics of
the day.

BEGGAR!—the only freemen of
your Commonwealth,
Free above Scot-free, that observe
no laws,
Obey no governor, use no religion
But what they draw from their
own ancient customs
Or constitute themselves, yet they
are no rebels.

Brome.

HERE has been such a stormy en-
counter
Betwixt my cousin Captain and
this soldier,

About I know not what!—nothing,
indeed;
Competitions, degrees, and com-
paratives
Of soldiership!—

A Faire Quarrel.

IF you fail honor here,
Never presume to serve her any
more;
Bid farewell to the integrity of
arms,
And the honorable name of sol-
dier
Fall from you, like a shivered
wreath of laurel
By thunder struck from a desert-
lesse forehead.

A Faire Quarrel.

THE Lord Abbot had a soul
Subtile and quick, and searching
as the fire:
By magic stairs he went as deep as
hell,
And if in devils' possession gold
be kept,
He brought some sure from thence
—'t is hid in caves,
Known, save to me, to none —
The Wonder of a Kingdome.

MANY great ones
Would part with half their states,
to have the plan
And credit to beg in the first
style. —

Beggar's Bush.

WHO is he?—One that for the
lack of land
Shall fight upon the water—he
bath challenged
Formerly the grand whale; and by
his titles
Of Leviathan, Behemoth, and so
forth.
He tilted with a sword-fish—
Marry, sir,
Th' aquatic had the best—the ar-
gument
Still galls our champion's breech.
Old Play.

TELL me not of it, friend — when
 the young weep,
 Their tears are lukewarm brine ; —
 from our old eyes
 Sorrow falls down like hail-drops
 of the North,
 Chilling the furrows of our with-
 ered cheeks,
 Cold as our hopes and hardened
 as our feeling —
 Theirs, as they fall, sink sightless
 — ours recoil,
 Heap the fair plain and bleaken
 all before us.

Old Play.

REMORSE — she ne'er forsakes
 us ! —
 A bloodhound stanch — she tracks
 our rapid step
 Through the wild labyrinth of
 youthful frenzy,
 Unbeard, perchance, until old age
 hath tamed us ;
 Then, in our lair, when Time hath
 chilled our joints
 And maimed our hope of combat
 or of flight,
 We hear her deep-mouthed bay,
 announcing all
 Of wrath and woe and punishment
 that bides us.

Old Play.

STILL in his dead hand clenched
 remain the strings
 That thrill his father's heart —
 e'en as the limb,
 Lopped off and laid in grave, re-
 tains, they tell us,
 Strange commerce with the mutil-
 ated stump,
 Whose nerves are twinging still in
 maimed existence.

Old Play.

LIFE, with you,
 Glows in the brain and dances in
 the arteries ;

'T is like the wine some joyous
 guest hath quaffed,
 That glads the heart and elevates
 the fancy : —
 Mine is the poor residuum of the
 cup,
 Vapid and dull and tasteless, only
 soiling
 With its base dregs the vessel that
 contains it.

Old Play.

YES ? I love Justice well — as well
 as you do —
 But, since the good dame 's blind,
 she shall excuse me,
 If, time and reason fitting, I prove
 dumb ; —
 The breath I utter now shall be no
 means
 To take away from me my breath
 in future.

Old Play.

WELL, well, at worst, 't is neither
 theft nor coinage,
 Granting I knew all that you
 charge me with.
 What tho' the tomb hath born a
 second birth
 And given the wealth to one that
 knew not on 't,
 Yet fair exchange was never rob-
 bery,
 Far less pure bounty —

Old Play.

LIFE ebbs from such old age, un-
 marked and silent,
 As the slow neap-tide leaves yon
 stranded galley.
 Late she rocked merrily at the
 least impulse
 That wind or wave could give ; but
 now her keel
 Is settling on the sand, her mast
 has ta'en
 An angle with the sky from which
 it shifts not.

Each wave receding shakes her
less and less,
Till, bedded on the strand, she shall
remain
Useless as motionless.

Old Play.

So, while the Goose, of whom the
fable told,
Incumbent brooded o'er her eggs
of gold,
With hand outstretched impatient
to destroy,
Stole on her secret nest the cruel
Boy,
Whose gripe rapacious changed
her splendid dream
For wings vain fluttering and for
dying scream.

The Loves of the Sea-Weeds.

LET those go see who will — I like
it not —
For, say he was a slave to rank
and pomp,
And all the nothings he is now di-
vorced from
By the hard doom of stern neces-
sity;
Yet is it sad to mark his altered
brow,
Where Vanity adjusts her flimsy
veil
O'er the deep wrinkles of repent-
ant Anguish.

Old Play.

FORTUNE, you say, flies from us
— She but circles,
Like the fleet sea-bird round the
fowler's skiff, —
Lost in the mist one moment, and
the next
Brushing the white sail with her
whiter wing,
As if to court the aim. — Experi-
ence watches,
And has her on the wheel. —

Old Play.

FROM THE BLACK DWARF

THE bleakest rock upon the lone-
liest heath
Feels in its barrenness some touch
of spring;
And, in the April dew or beam of
May,
Its moss and lichen freshen and
revive;
And thus the heart, most seared
to human pleasure,
Melts at the tear, joys in the smile
of woman.

Beaumont.

'T WAS time and griefs
That framed him thus: Time, with
his fairer hand,
Offering the fortunes of his former
days,
The former man may make him —
Bring us to him,
And chance it as it may.

Old Play.

FROM OLD MORTALITY

AROUSE thee, youth! — it is no
common call, —
God's Church is leaguered — haste
to man the wall;
Haste where the Red-cross ban-
ners wave on high,
Signals of honored death or vic-
tory.

James Duff.

My hounds may a' rin master-
less,
My hawks may fly frae tree to
tree,
My lord may grip my vassal
lands,
For there again maun I never
be!

Old Ballad.

SOUND, sound the clarion, fill
the fife!

To all the sensual world pro-
claim,

One crowded hour of glorious
life

Is worth an age without a
name.

Anonymous.

FROM ROB ROY

IN the wide pile, by others heeded
not,

Hers was one sacred solitary spot,
Whose gloomy aisles and bending
shelves contain

For moral hunger food, and cures
for moral pain.

Anonymous.

DIRE was his thought who first in
poison steeped

The weapon formed for slaughter
— direr his,

And worthier of damnation, who
instilled

The mortal venom in the social
cup,

To fill the veins with death instead
of life.

Anonymous.

LOOK round thee, young Astolpho:
Here's the place

Which men — for being poor — are
sent to starve in —

Rude remedy, I trow, for sore dis-
ease.

Within these walls, stifled by damp
and stench,

Doth Hope's fair torch expire; and
at the snuff,

Ere yet 't is quite extinct, rude,
wild, and wayward,

The desperate revelries of wild
despair,

Kindling their hell-born cressets,
light to deeds

That the poor captive would have
died ere practised,

Till bondage sunk his soul to his
condition.

The Prison, Act I. Scene 3.

FAR as the eye could reach no tree
was seen,

Earth, clad in russet, scorned the
lively green;

No birds, except as birds of pas-
sage, flew;

No bee was heard to hum, no dove
to coo;

No streams, as amber smooth, as
amber clear,

Were seen to glide, or heard to
warble here.

Prophecy of Famine.

'WOE to the vanquished!' was
stern Brenno's word,

When sunk proud Rome beneath
the Gallic sword —

'Woe to the vanquished!' when
his massive blade

Bore down the scale against her
ransom weighed,

And on the field of foughten bat-
tle still,

Who knows no limit save the vic-
tor's will.

The Gaulliad.

AND be he safe restored ere even-
ing set,

Or, if there's vengeance in an in-
jured heart

And power to wreak it in an armed
hand,

Your land shall ache for 't.

Old Play.

FAREWELL to the land where the
clouds love to rest,

Like the shroud of the dead, on
the mountain's cold breast;

To the cataract's roar where the
eagles reply,

And the lake her lone bosom ex-
pands to the sky.

FROM THE HEART OF
MIDLOTHIAN

To man, in this his trial state,
The privilege is given,
When lost by tides of human fate,
To anchor fast in Heaven.

Watts' Hymns.

LAW, take thy victim! — May she
find the mercy
In yon mild heaven which this
hard world denies her!

AND Need and Misery, Vice and
Danger, bind
In sad alliance each degraded
mind.

I BESEECH you —
These tears beseech you, and these
chaste hands woo you,
That never yet were heaved but
to things holy —
Things like yourself — You are a
God above us;
Be as a God then, full of saving
mercy!

The Bloody Brother.

HAPPY thou art! then happy be,
Nor envy me my lot;
Thy happy state I envy thee,
And peaceful cot.

Lady C — C — l.

FROM THE BRIDE OF LAM-
MERMOOR

THE hearth in hall was black and
dead,

No board was dight in bower
within,
Nor merry bowl nor welcome
bed;

'Here's sorry cheer,' quoth the
Heir of Linne.

*Old Ballad (Altered from 'The
Heir of Linne').*

As, to the Autumn breeze's bugle-
sound,

Various and vague the dry leaves
dance their round;

Or from the garner-door, on æther
borne,

The chaff flies devious from the
winnowed corn;

So vague, so devious, at the breath
of heaven,

From their fixed aim are mortal
counsels driven.

Anonymous.

HERE is a father now,
Will truck his daughter for a for-
eign venture,

Make her the stop-gap to some
cankered feud,

Or fling her o'er, like Jonah, to the
fishes,

To appease the sea at highest.

Anonymous.

SIR, stay at home and take an old
man's counsel:

Seek not to bask you by a stran-
ger's hearth;

Our own blue smoke is warmer
than their fire.

Domestic food is wholesome,
though 't is homely,

And foreign dainties poisonous,
though tasteful.

The French Courtezan.

TRUE-LOVE, an thou be true,

Thou hast ane kittle part to
play,

For fortune, fashion, fancy, and
thou

Maun strive for many a day.

I've kend by mony a friend's
tale,

Far better by this heart of
mine,

What time and change of fancy
avail,

A true love-knot to untwine.

Hendersoun.

WHY, now I have Dame Fortune
by the forelock,
And if she 'scapes my grasp the
fault is mine;
He that hath buffeted with stern
adversity,
Best knows to shape his course to
favoring breezes.

Old Play.

FROM THE LEGEND OF MONTROSE

DARK on their journey loured the
gloomy day,
Wild were the hills and doubtful
grew the way;
More dark, more gloomy, and more
doubtful showed
The mansion which received them
from the road.

The Travellers, a Romance.

Is this thy castle, Baldwin? Mel-
ancholy
Displays her sable banner from
the donjon,
Darkening the foam of the whole
surge beneath.
Were I a habitant, to see this
gloom
Pollute the face of nature, and to
hear
The ceaseless sound of wave and
sea-bird's scream,
I'd wish me in the hut that poor-
est peasant
E'er framed to give him temporary
shelter.

Browne.

THIS was the entry, then, these
stairs — but whither after?
Yet he that's sure to perish on
the land
May quit the nicety of card and
compass,
And trust the open sea without a
pilot.

Tragedy of Brennovalt.

FROM IVANHOE

AWAY! our journey lies through
dell and dingle,
Where the blithe fawn trips by its
timid mother,
Where the broad oak with inter-
cepting boughs
Chequers the sun-beam in the
greensward alley —
Up and away! — for lovely paths
are these
To tread, when the glad sun is on
his throne;
Less pleasant and less safe when
Cynthia's lamp
With doubtful glimmer lights the
dreary forest.

Ettrick Forest.

WHEN autumn nights were long
and drear,
And forest walks were dark
and dim,
How sweetly on the pilgrim's
ear
Was wont to steal the hermit's
hymn!

Devotion borrows Music's tone,
And Music took Devotion's
wing,
And, like the bird that hails the
sun,
They soar to heaven, and soar-
ing sing.
*The Hermit of Saint Clement's
Well.*

THE hottest horse will oft be
cool,
The dullest will show fire;
The friar will often play the
fool,
The fool will play the friar.
Old Song.

THIS wandering race, severed from
other men,
Boast yet their intercourse with
human arts;

The seas, the woods, the deserts,
 which they haunt,
 Find them acquainted with their
 secret treasures;
 And unregarded herbs and flowers
 and blossoms
 Display undreamed-of powers
 when gathered by them.

The Jew.

APPROACH the chamber, look
 upon his bed.
 His is the passing of no peaceful
 ghost,

Which, as the lark arises to the sky,
 Mid morning's sweetest breeze
 and softest dew,
 Is winged to heaven by good men's
 sighs and tears!

Anselm parts otherwise.

Old Play.

TRUST me, each state must have
 its policies:

Kingdoms have edicts, cities have
 their charters;

Even the wild outlaw in his forest-
 walk

Keeps yet some touch of civil dis-
 cipline.

For not since Adam wore his ver-
 dant apron

Hath man with man in social
 union dwelt,

But laws were made to draw that
 union closer.

Old Play.

AROUSE the tiger of Hyrcanian
 deserts,

Strive with the half-starved lion
 for his prey;

Lesser the risk than rouse the
 slumbering fire

Of wild Fanaticism.

Anonymous.

SAY not my art is fraud — all live
 by seeming.

The beggar begs with it, and the
 gay courtier

Gains land and title, rank and rule,
 by seeming:

The clergy scorn it not, and the
 bold soldier

Will eke with it his service. — All
 admit it,

All practise it; and he who is con-
 tent

With showing what he is shall
 have small credit

In church or camp or state. — So
 wags the world.

Old Play.

STERN was the law which bade its
 votaries leave

At human woes with human hearts
 to grieve;

Stern was the law which at the
 winning wile

Of frank and harmless mirth for-
 bade to smile;

But sterner still when high the
 iron-rod

Of tyrant power she shook, and
 called that power of God.

The Middle Ages.

FROM THE MONASTERY

O AY! the Monks, the Monks,
 they did the mischief!

Theirs all the grossness, all the
 superstition

Of a most gross and superstitious
 age. —

May HE be praised that sent the
 healthful tempest,

And scattered all these pestilen-
 tial vapors;

But that we owed them *all* to yon-
 der Harlot

Throned on the seven hills with
 her cup of gold,

I will as soon believe, with kind
 Sir Roger,

That old Moll White took wing
 with cat and broomstick,

And raised the last night's thunder.

Old Play.

IN yon lone vale his early youth
was bred.

Not solitary then — the bugle-horn
Of fell Alecto often waked its
windings,

From where the brook joins the
majestic river,

To the wild northern bog, the cur-
lieu's haunt,

Where oozes forth its first and fee-
ble streamlet.

Old Play.

A PRIEST, ye cry, a priest! — lame
shepherds they,

How shall they gather in the strag-
gling flock?

Dumb dogs which bark not — how
shall they compel

The loitering vagrants to the Mas-
ter's fold?

Fitter to bask before the blazing
fire,

And snuff the mess neat-handed
Phillis dresses,

Than on the snow-wreath battle
with the wolf.

The Reformation.

Now let us sit in conclave. That
these weeds

Be rooted from the vineyard of the
Church,

That these foul tares be severed
from the wheat,

We are, I trust, agreed. Yet how
to do this,

Nor hurt the wholesome crop and
tender vine-plants,

Craves good advisement.

The Reformation.

NAY, dally not with time, the wise
man's treasure,

Though fools are lavish on't — the
fatal Fisher

Hooks souls while we waste mo-
ments.

Old Play.

You call this education, do you
not?

Why, 't is the forced march of a
herd of bullocks

Before a shouting drover. The
glad van

Move on at ease, and pause awhile
to snatch

A passing morsel from the dewy
greensward,

While all the blows, the oaths, the
indignation,

Fall on the croupe of the ill-fated
laggard

That cripples in the rear.

Old Play.

THERE'S something in that an-
cient superstition,

Which, erring as it is, our fancy
loves.

The spring that, with its thousand
crystal bubbles,

Bursts from the bosom of some
desert rock

In secret solitude, may well be
deemed

The haunt of something purer,
more refined,

And mightier than ourselves.

Old Play.

NAY, let me have the friends who
eat my victuals

As various as my dishes. The
feast's naught,

Where one huge plate predomi-
nates. — John Plaintext,

He shall be mighty beef, our Eng-
lish staple;

The worthy Alderman, a buttered
dumpling;

You pair of whiskered Cornets,
ruffs and rees;

Their friend the Dandy, a green
goose in sippets.

And so the board is spread at
once and filled

On the same principle — Variety.

New Play.

HE strikes no coin, 't is true, but
coins new phrases,
And vends them forth as knaves
vend gilded counters,
Which wise men scorn and fools
accept in payment.

Old Play.

A COURTIER extraordinary, who
by diet
Of meats and drinks, his temper-
ate exercise,
Choice music, frequent bath, his
horary shifts
Of shirts and waistcoats, means to
immortalize
Mortality itself, and makes the
essence
Of his whole happiness the trim
of court.

Magnetic Lady.

NOW choose thee, gallant, be-
twixt wealth and honor;
There lies the pelf, in sum to bear
thee through
The dance of youth and the tur-
moil of manhood,
Yet leave enough for age's chim-
ney-corner;
But an thou grasp to it, farewell
Ambition!
Farewell each hope of bettering
thy condition,
And raising thy low rank above
the churls
That till the earth for bread!

Old Play.

INDIFFERENT, but indifferent—
pshaw! he doth it not
Like one who is his craft's master
— ne'ertheless
I have seen a clown confer a
bloody coxcomb
On one who was a master of de-
fence.

Old Play.

YES, life hath left him—every
busy thought,
Each fiery passion, every strong
affection,

The sense of outward ill and in-
ward sorrow,
Are fled at once from the pale
trunk before me;
And I have given that which
spoke and moved,
Thought, acted, suffered, as a liv-
ing man,
To be a ghastly form of bloody
clay,
Soon the foul food for reptiles.

Old Play.

'T IS when the wound is stiffening
with the cold,
The warrior first feels pain— 't is
when the heat
And fiery fever of his soul is past,
The sinner feels remorse.

Old Play.

I 'LL walk on tiptoe; arm my eye
with caution,
My heart with courage, and my
hand with weapon,
Like him who ventures on a lion's
den.

Old Play.

NOW, by Our Lady, Sheriff, 't is
hard reckoning
That I, with every odds of birth
and barony,
Should be detained here for the
casual death
Of a wild forester, whose utmost
having
Is but the brazen buckle of the
belt
In which he sticks his hedge-
knife.

Old Play.

YOU call it an ill angel— it may be
so;
But sure I am, among the ranks
which fell,
'T is the first fiend e'er counselled
man to rise,
And win the bliss the sprite him-
self had forfeited.

Old Play.

AT school I knew him — a sharp-
witted youth,
Grave, thoughtful, and reserved
amongst his mates,
Turning the hours of sport and
food to labor,
Starving his body to inform his
mind.

Old Play.

NOW on my faith this gear is all
entangled,
Like to the yarn-clew of the drowsy
knitter,
Dragged by the frolic kitten
through the cabin
While the good dame sits nodding
o'er the fire —
Masters, attend; 't will crave some
skill to clear it.

Old Play.

IT is not texts will do it — Church
artillery
Are silenced soon by real ord-
nance,
And canons are but vain opposed
to cannon.
Go, coin your crosier, melt your
church plate down,
Bid the starved soldier banquet in
your halls,
And quaff your long-saved hogs-
heads. — Turn them out
Thus primed with your good cheer,
to guard your wall,
And they will venture for 't.

Old Play.

FROM THE ABBOT

IN the wild storm
The seaman hews his mast down,
and the merchant
Heaves to the billows wares he
once deemed precious:
So prince and peer, mid popular
contentions,
Cast off their favorites.

Old Play.

THOU hast each secret of the
household, Francis.
I dare be sworn thou hast been in
the buttery
Steeping thy curious humor in fat
ale,
And in the butler's tattle — ay, or
chatting
With the glib waiting-woman o'er
her comfits —
These bear the key to each domes-
tic mystery.

Old Play.

THE sacred tapers' lights are gone,
Gray moss has clad the altar stone,
The holy image is o'erthrown,
The bell has ceased to toll.
The long ribbed aisles are burst
and shrunk,
The holy shrines to ruin sunk,
Departed is the pious monk,
God's blessing on his soul!

Rediviva.

LIFE hath its May, and all is mirth-
ful then:
The woods are vocal and the flow-
ers all odor;
Its very blast has mirth in 't, and
the maidens,
The while they don their cloaks
to skreen their kirtles,
Laugh at the rain that wets them.

Old Play.

NAY, hear me, brother — I am
elder, wiser,
And holier than thou; and age
and wisdom
And holiness have peremptory
claims,
And will be listened to.

Old Play.

NOT the wild billow, when it
breaks its barrier —
Not the wild wind, escaping from
its cavern —
Not the wild fiend, that mingles
both together

And pours their rage upon the
ripening harvest,
Can match the wild freaks of this
mirthful meeting —
Comic, yet fearful — droll, and yet
destructive.

The Conspiracy.

YOUTH! thou wear'st to manhood
now;

Darker lip and darker brow,
Statelier step, more pensive mien,
In thy face and gait are seen:
Thou must now brook midnight
watches,
Take thy food and sport by
snatches!

For the gambol and the jest
Thou wert wont to love the best,
Graver follies must thou follow,
But as senseless, false, and hol-
low.

Life, a Poem.

It is and is not — 't is the thing I
sought for,
Have kneeled for, prayed for,
risked my fame and life for,
And yet it is not — no more than
the shadow
Upon the hard, cold, flat, and pol-
ished mirror,
Is the warm, graceful, rounded,
living substance
Which it presents in form and
lineament.

Old Play.

GIVE me a morsel on the green-
sward rather,
Coarse as you will the cooking —
let the fresh spring
Bubble beside my napkin — and
the free birds,
Twittering and chirping, hop from
bough to bough,
To claim the crumbs I leave for
perquisites —
Your prison-feasts I like not.

The Woodman, a Drama.

'T is a weary life this —
Vaults overhead, and grates and
bars around me,
And my sad hours spent with as
sad companions,
Whose thoughts are brooding o'er
their own mischances,
Far, far too deeply to take part in
mine.

The Woodman.

AND when Love's torch hath set
the heart in flame,
Comes Seignior Reason, with his
saws and cautions,
Giving such aid as the old gray-
beard Sexton,
Who from the church-vault drags
his crazy engine,
To ply its dribbling ineffectual
streamlet
Against a conflagration.

Old Play.

YES, it is she whose eyes looked
on thy childhood,
And watched with trembling hope
thy dawn of youth,
That now, with these same eye-
balls, dimmed with age,
And dimmer yet with tears, sees
thy dishonor.

Old Play.

IN some breasts passion lies con-
cealed and silent,
Like war's swart powder in a
castle vault,
Until occasion, like the linstock,
lights it;
Then comes at once the lightning
and the thunder,
And distant echoes tell that all is
rent asunder.

Old Play.

DEATH distant? — No, alas! he's
ever with us,
And shakes the dart at us in all
our actings:

He lurks within our cup while
we're in health;
Sits by our sick-bed, mocks our
medicines;
We cannot walk, or sit, or ride, or
travel,
But Death is by to seize us when
he lists.

The Spanish Father.

AY, Pedro,—come you here with
mask and lantern,
Ladder of ropes, and other moon-
shine tools—
Why, youngster, thou mayst cheat
the old Duenna,
Flatter the waiting-woman, bribe
the valet;
But know, that I her father play
the Gryphon,
Tameless and sleepless, proof to
fraud or bribe,
And guard the hidden treasure of
her beauty.

The Spanish Father.

It is a time of danger, not of revel,
When churchmen turn to mas-
quers.

The Spanish Father.

AY, sir—our ancient crown, in
these wild times,
Oft stood upon a cast—the game-
ster's ducat,
So often staked and lost and then
regained,
Scarce knew so many hazards.

The Spanish Father.

FROM KENILWORTH

NOT serve two masters?—Here's
a youth will try it—
Would fain serve God, yet give the
devil his due;
Says grace before he doth a deed
of villany,
And returns his thanks devoutly
when 't is acted.

Old Play.

HE was a man
Versed in the world as pilot in his
compass.
The needle pointed ever to that
interest
Which was his loadstar, and he
spread his sails
With vantage to the gale of others'
passion.

The Deceiver, a Tragedy.

THIS is he
Who rides on the court-gale; con-
trols its tides;
Knows all their secret shoals and
fatal eddies;
Whose frown abases and whose
smile exalts.
He shines like any rainbow—and,
perchance,
His colors are as transient.

Old Play.

THIS is rare news thou tell'st me,
my good fellow;
There are two bulls fierce battling
on the green
For one fair heifer—if the one
goes down,
The dale will be more peaceful,
and the herd,
Which have small interest in their
brulziement,
May pasture there in peace.

Old Play.

WELL, then, our course is chosen;
spread the sail,—
Heave oft the lead and mark the
soundings well;
Look to the helm, good master;
many a shoal
Marks this stern coast, and rocks
where sits the siren
Who, like ambition, lures men to
their ruin.

The Shipwreck.

Now God be good to me in this
wild pilgrimage!
All hope in human aid I cast be-
hind me.

O, who would be a woman? who
that fool,

A weeping, pining, faithful, loving
woman?

She hath hard measure still where
she hopes kindest,

And all her bounties only make
ingrates.

Love's Pilgrimage.

HARK! the bells summon and the
bugle calls,

But she the fairest answers not;
the tide

Of nobles and of ladies throngs the
halls,

But she the loveliest must in secret
hide.

What eyes were thine, proud
prince, which in the gleam

Of yon gay meteors lost that better
sense

That o'er the glow-worm doth the
star esteem,

And merit's modest blush o'er
courtly insolence?

The Glass Slipper.

WHAT, man, ne'er lack a draught
when the full can

Stands at thine elbow and craves
emptying! —

Nay, fear not me, for I have no de-
light

To watch men's vices, since I have
myself

Of virtue naught to boast of. — I'm
a striker,

Would have the world strike with
me, pellmell, all.

Pandæmonium.

Now fare thee well, my master! if
true service

Be guerdoned with hard looks,
e'en cut the tow-line,

And let our barks across the path-
less flood

Hold different courses.

Shipwreck.

Now bid the steeple rock — she
comes, she comes!

Speak for us, bells! speak for us,
shrill-tongued tuckets!

Stand to the linstock, gunner; let
thy cannon

Play such a peal as if a Paynim
foe

Came stretched in turbaned ranks
to storm the ramparts.

We will have pageants too; but
that craves wit,

And I'm a rough-hewn soldier.

*The Virgin-Queen, a Tragi-
Comedy.*

THE wisest sovereigns err like
private men,

And royal hand has sometimes
laid the sword

Of chivalry upon a worthless shoul-
der,

Which better had been branded
by the hangman.

What then? Kings do their best,
— and they and we

Must answer for the intent, and
not the event.

Old Play.

HERE stands the victim — there
the proud betrayer,

E'en as the hind pulled down by
strangling dogs

Lies at the hunter's feet, who
courteous proffers

To some high dame, the Dian of
the chase,

To whom he looks for guerdon, his
sharp blade

To gash the sobbing throat.

The Woodman.

HIGH o'er the eastern steep the
sun is beaming,

And darkness flies with her deceit-
ful shadows;

So truth prevails o'er falsehood.

Old Play.

FROM THE PIRATE

'T IS not alone the scene — the
man, Anselmo.

The man finds sympathies in these
wild wastes

And roughly tumbling seas, which
fairer views

And smoother waves deny him.

Ancient Drama.

SHE does no work by halves, yon
raving ocean ;

Engulfing those she strangles, her
wild womb

Affords the mariners whom she
hath dealt on

Their death at once and sepulchre.

Old Play.

THIS is a gentle trader and a pru-
dent —

He's no Autolycus, to blear your
eye

With quips of worldly gauds and
gamesomeness,

But seasons all his glittering
merchandise

With wholesome doctrine suited
to the use,

As men sauce goose with sage and
rosemary.

Old Play.

ALL your ancient customs
And long-descended usages I'll
change.

Ye shall not eat, nor drink, nor
speak, nor move,

Think, look, or walk, as ye were
wont to do ;

Even your marriage-beds shall
know mutation ;

The bride shall have the stock, the
groom the wall ;

For all old practice will I turn and
change,

And call it reformation — marry,
will I !

'Tis Even that we're at Odds.

WE'll keep our customs — what is
law itself

But old established custom ? What
religion —

I mean, with one half of the men
that use it —

Save the good use and wont that
carries them

To worship how and where their
fathers worshipped ?

All things resolve in custom —
we'll keep ours.

Old Play.

I DO love these ancient ruins !
We never tread upon them but we
set

Our foot upon some reverend his-
tory,

And questionless, here in this open
court —

Which now lies naked to the in-
juries

Of stormy weather — some men lie
interred,

Loved the Church so well and gave
so largely to it,

They thought it should have cano-
pied their bones

Till doomsday ; — but all things
have their end —

Churches and cities, which have
diseases like to men,

Must have like death which we
have.

Duchess of Malfy.

SEE yonder woman, whom our
swains revere

And dread in secret, while they
take her counsel

When sweetheart shall be kind, or
when cross dame shall die ;

Where lurks the thief who stole
the silver tankard,

And how the pestilent murrain
may be cured ; —

This sage adviser's mad, stark
mad, my friend ;

Yet in her madness hath the art
and cunning

To wring fools' secrets from their
inmost bosoms,
And pay inquirers with the coin
they gave her.

Old Play.

WHAT ho, my jovial mates! come
on! we'll frolic it
Like fairies frisking in the merry
moonshine,
Seen by the curtal friar, who, from
some christening
Or some blithe bridal, hies belated
cell-ward —

He starts, and changes his bold
bottle swagger
To churchman's pace professional,
— and, ransacking
His treacherous memory for some
holy hymn,
Finds but the roundel of the mid-
night catch.

Old Play.

I STRIVE like to the vessel in the
tide-way,
Which, lacking favoring breeze,
hath not the power
To stem the powerful current. —
Even so,
Resolving daily to forsake my
vices,
Habit, strong circumstance, re-
newed temptation,
Sweep me to sea again. — O hea-
venly breath,
Fill thou my sails, and aid the
feeble vessel,
Which ne'er can reach the blessed
port without thee!

'Tis Odds when Evens meet.

PARENTAL love, my friend, has
power o'er wisdom,
And is the charm, which, like the
falconer's lure,
Can bring from heaven the highest
soaring spirits. —
So, when famed Prosper doffed
his magic robe
It was Miranda plucked it from
his shoulders.

Old Play.

HARK to the insult loud, the bitter
sneer,
The fierce threat answering to the
brutal jeer;
Oaths fly like pistol-shots, and
vengeful words
Clash with each other like conflict-
ing swords. —
The robber's quarrel by such
sounds is shown,
And true men have some chance
to gain their own.

Captivity, a Poem.

OVER the mountains and under
the waves,
Over the fountains and under the
graves,
Over floods that are deepest,
Which Neptune obey,
Over rocks that are steepest,
Love will find out the way.

Old Song.

FROM THE FORTUNES OF NIGEL

Now Scot and English are agreed,
And Saunders hastes to cross the
Tweed,
Where, such the splendors that
attend him,
His very mother scarce had kenned
him.
His metamorphosis behold
From Glasgow frieze to cloth of
gold;
His back-sword with the iron-hilt,
To rapier fairly hatched and gilt;
Was ever seen a gallant braver!
His very bonnet's grown a beaver.

The Reformation.

THIS, sir, is one among the Seign-
iory,
Has wealth at will, and will to use
his wealth,
And wit to increase it. Marry, his
worst folly
Lies in a thriftless sort of char-
ity,

That goes a-gadding sometimes
after objects
Which wise men will not see when
thrust upon them.

The Old Couple.

AY, sir, the clouted shoe hath oft-
times craft in 't,
As says the rustic proverb; and
your citizen,
In 's grogram suit, gold chain, and
well-blacked shoes,
Bears under his flat cap oft-times a
brain
Wiser than burns beneath the cap
and feather,
Or seethes within the statesman's
velvet nightcap.

Read me my Riddle.

WHEREFORE come ye not to
court?
Certain 't is the rarest sport;
There are silks and jewels glisten-
ing,
Prattling fools and wise men lis-
tening,
Bullies among brave men justling,
Beggars amongst nobles bustling;
Low-breathed talkers, minion lisp-
ers,
Cutting honest throats by whis-
pers;
Wherefore come ye not to court?
Skelton swears 't is glorious sport.

Skelton Skeltonizeth.

O, I DO know him — 't is the
mouldy lemon
Which our court wits will wet
their lips withal,
When they would sauce their hon-
ied conversation
With somewhat sharper flavor. —
Marry, sir,
That virtue's wellnigh left him —
all the juice
That was so sharp and poignant
is squeezed out;
While the poor rind, although as
sour as ever,

Must season soon the draff we give
our grunTERS,
For two-legged things are weary
on 't.

The Chamberlain, a Comedy.

THINGS needful we have thought
on; but the thing
Of all most needful — that which
Scripture terms,
As if alone it merited regard,
The ONE thing needful — that's
yet unconsidered.

The Chamberlain.

AH! mark the matron well — and
laugh not, Harry,
At her old steeple-hat and velvet
guard —
I've called her like the ear of Di-
onysius;
I mean that ear-formed vault, built
o'er the dungeon
To catch the groans and discon-
tented murmurs
Of his poor bondsmen. — Even so
doth Martha
Drink up for her own purpose all
that passes,
Or is supposed to pass, in this wide
city —
She can retail it too, if that her
profit
Shall call on her to do so; and re-
tail it
For your advantage, so that you
can make
Your profit jump with hers.

The Conspiracy.

BID not thy fortune troll upon the
wheels
Of yonder dancing cups of mottled
bone;
And drown it not, like Egypt's
royal harlot,
Dissolving her rich pearl in the
brimmed wine-cup.
These are the arts, Lothario,
which shrink acres

Into brief yards—bring sterling
pounds to farthings,
Credit to infamy; and the poor
gull,
Who might have lived an honored,
easy life,
To ruin and an unregarded grave.

The Changes.

THIS is the very barn-yard
Where muster daily the prime
cocks o' the game,
Ruffle their pinions, crow till they
are hoarse,
And spar about a barleycorn.
Here, too, chickens,
The callow unfledged brood of forward folly,
Learn first to rear the crest, and
aim the spur,
And tune their note like full-plumed Chanticleer.

The Bear Garden.

LET the proud salmon gorge the
feathered hook,
Then strike, and then you have
him.—He will wince;
Spin out your line that it shall
whistle from you
Some twenty yards or so, yet you
shall have him—
Marry! you must have patience—the stout rock
Which in his trust hath edges
something sharp;
And the deep pool hath ooze and
sludge enough
To mar your fishing—'less you
are more careful.

Albion, or the Double Kings.

GIVE way—give way—I must
and will have justice,
And tell me not of privilege and
place;
Where I am injured, there I'll sue
redress.
Look to it, every one who bars my
access;
I have a heart to feel the injury,

A hand to right myself, and, by
my honor,
That hand shall grasp what gray-
beard Law denies me.

The Chamberlain.

COME hither, young one—Mark
me! Thou art now
'Mongst men o' the sword, that
live by reputation
More than by constant income—
Single-suited
They are, I grant you; yet each
single suit
Maintains, on the rough guess, a
thousand followers—
And they be men who, hazarding
their all,
Needful apparel, necessary in-
come,
And human body, and immortal
soul,
Do in the very deed but hazard
nothing—
So strictly is that ALL bound in
reversion;
Clothes to the broker, income to
the usurer,—
And body to disease, and soul to
the foul fiend;
Who laughs to see Soldadoes and
fooladoes
Play better than himself his game
on earth.

The Mohocks.

Mother. What! dazzled by a
flash of Cupid's mirror,
With which the boy, as mortal
urchins wont,
Flings back the sunbeam in the
eye of passengers—
Then laughs to see them stum-
ble!

Daughter. Mother! no—
It was a lightning-flash which daz-
zled me,
And never shall these eyes see
true again.

*Beef and Pudding, an Old Eng-
lish Comedy.*

By this good light, a wench of
matchless mettle!

This were a leaguer-lass to love a
soldier,

To bind his wounds, and kiss his
bloody brow,

And sing a roundel as she helped
to arm him,

Though the rough foeman's drums
were beat so nigh

They seemed to bear the burden.

Old Play.

CREDIT me, friend, it hath been
ever thus

Since the ark rested on Mount
Ararat.

False man hath sworn, and wo-
man hath believed —

Repented and reproached, and
then believed once more.

The New World.

ROVE not from pole to pole — the
man lives here

Whose razor's only equalled by
his beer;

And where, in either sense, the
cockney-put

May, if he pleases, get confounded
cut.

*On the Sign of an Alehouse kept
by a Barber.*

CHANCE will not do the work —
Chance sends the breeze;

But if the pilot slumber at the
helm,

The very wind that wafts us to-
wards the port

May dash us on the shelves. — The
steersman's part is vigilance,

Blow it or rough or smooth.

Old Play.

THIS is the time — Heaven's maid-
en sentinel

Hath quitted her high watch — the
lesser spangles

Are paling one by one; give me
the ladder

And the short lever — bid An-
thony

Keep with his carabine the wick-
et-gate;

And do thou bare thy knife and
follow me,

For we will in and do it — dark-
ness like this

Is dawning of our fortunes.

Old Play.

DEATH finds us mid our play-
things — snatches us,

As a cross nurse might do a way-
ward child,

From all our toys and baubles.
His rough call

Unlooses all our favorite ties on
earth;

And well if they are such as may
be answered

In yonder world, where all is
judged of truly.

Old Play.

GIVE us good voyage, gentle
stream — we stun not

Thy sober ear with sounds of rev-
elry,

Wake not the slumbering echoes
of thy banks

With voice of flute and horn — we
do but seek

On the broad pathway of thy
swelling bosom

To glide in silent safety.

The Double Bridal.

THIS way lie safety and a sure re-
treat;

Yonder lie danger, shame, and
punishment.

Most welcome danger then — nay,
let me say,

Though spoke with swelling heart
— welcome e'en shame;

And welcome punishment — for,
call me guilty,

I do but pay the tax that's due to
justice;

And call me guiltless, then that
punishment
Is shame to those alone who do
inflict it.

The Tribunal.

How fares the man on whom good
men would look
With eyes where scorn and cen-
sure combated,
But that kind Christian love hath
taught the lesson —
That they who merit most con-
tempt and hate
Do most deserve our pity —

Old Play.

MARRY, come up, sir, with your
gentle blood!
Here 's a red stream beneath this
coarse blue doublet
That warms the heart as kindly as
if drawn
From the far source of old Assyr-
ian kings,
Who first made mankind subject
to their sway.

Old Play.

WE are not worse at once — the
course of evil
Begins so slowly and from such
slight source,
An infant's hand might stem its
breach with clay;
But let the stream get deeper, and
philosophy —
Ay, and religion too — shall strive
in vain
To turn the headlong torrent.

Old Play.

FROM PEVERIL OF THE PEAK

WHY then, we will have bellow-
ing of beeves,
Broaching of barrels, brandishing
of spigots;

Blood shall flow freely, but it shall
be gore
Of herds and flocks and venison
and poultry,
Joined to the brave heart's-blood
of John-a-Barleycorn!

Old Play.

No, sir, I will not pledge — I'm
one of those
Who think good wine needs nei-
ther bush nor preface
To make it welcome. If you doubt
my word,
Fill the quart-cup, and see if I will
choke on 't.

Old Play.

You shall have no worse prison
than my chamber,
Nor jailer than myself.

The Captain.

Ascasto. Can she not speak?

Oswald. If speech be only in
accented sounds,

Framed by the tongue and lips,
the maiden's dumb;

But if by quick and apprehensive
look,

By motion, sign, and glance, to
give each meaning,

Express as clothed in language, be
termed speech,

She hath that wondrous faculty;
for her eyes,

Like the bright stars of heaven,
can hold discourse,

Though it be mute and soundless.

Old Play.

THIS is a love meeting? See the
maiden mourns,
And the sad suitor bends his looks
on earth.

There 's more hath passed between
them than belongs

To Love's sweet sorrows.

Old Play.

Now, hoist the anchor, mates —
and let the sails
Give their broad bosom to the bux-
om wind,
Like lass that woos a lover.

Anonymous.

HE was a fellow in a peasant's
garb;
Yet one could censure you a
woodcock's carving,
Like any courtier at the ordinary.

The Ordinary.

WE meet, as men see phantoms in
a dream,
Which glide and sigh and sign and
move their lips,
But make no sound; or, if they
utter voice,
'T is but a low and undistinguished
moaning,
Which has nor word nor sense of
uttered sound.

The Chieftain.

THE course of human life is
changeable still
As is the fickle wind and wander-
ing rill;
Or, like the light dance which the
wild-breeze weaves
Amidst the faded race of fallen
leaves;
Which now its breath bears down,
now tosses high,
Beats to the earth, or wafts to
middle sky.
Such, and so varied, the precari-
ous play
Of fate with man, frail tenant of a
day!

Anonymous.

NECESSITY — thou best of peace-
makers,
As well as surest prompter of in-
vention —
Help us to composition!

Anonymous.

THIS is some creature of the ele-
ments

Most like your sea-gull. He can
wheel and whistle

His screaming song, e'en when the
storm is loudest —

Take for his sheeted couch the
restless foam

Of the wild wave-crest — slumber
in the calm,

And dally with the storm. Yet
't is a gull,

An arrant gull, with all this.

The Chieftain.

I FEAR the devil worst when gown
and cassock,

Or in the lack of them, old Calvin's
cloak,

Conceals his cloven hoof.

Anonymous.

'T is the black ban-dog of our jail
— pray look on him,

But at a wary distance — rouse
him not —

He bays not till he worries.

The Black Dog of Newgate.

'SPEAK not of niceness, when
there 's chance of wreck,'

The captain said, as ladies writhed
their neck

To see the dying dolphin flap the
deck:

'If we go down, on us these gen-
try sup;

We dine upon them, if we haul
them up.

Wise men applaud us when we
eat the eaters,

As the devil laughs when keen
folks cheat the cheaters.'

The Sea Voyage.

CONTENTIONS fierce,
Ardent, and dire, spring from no
petty cause.

Albion.

HE came amongst them like a
new-raised spirit,
To speak of dreadful judgments
that impend,
And of the wrath to come.

The Reformer.

AND some for safety took the
dreadful leap;
Some for the voice of Heaven
seemed calling on them;
Some for advancement, or for
lucre's sake —
I leaped in frolic.

The Dream.

HIGH feasting was there there —
the gilded roofs
Rung to the wassail-health — the
dancer's step
Sprung to the chord responsive —
the gay gamester
To fate's disposal flung his heap
of gold,
And laughed alike when it in-
creased or lessened:
Such virtue hath court-air to teach
us patience
Which schoolmen preach in vain.

Why come ye not to Court?

HERE stand I tight and trim,
Quick of eye, though little of limb;
He who denieth the word I have
spoken,
Betwixt him and me shall lances
be broken.

*Lay of the Little John de
Saintre.*

FROM QUENTIN DURWARD

PAINTERS show Cupid blind —
hath Hymen eyes?
Or is his sight warped by those
spectacles
Which parents, guardians, and ad-
visers lend him
That he may look through them
on lands and mansions,

On jewels, gold, and all such rich
donations,
And see their value ten times
magnified? —
Methinks 't will brook a ques-
tion.

*The Miseries of Enforced Mar-
riage.*

THIS is a lecturer so skilled in
policy
That — no disparagement to Sa-
tan's cunning —
He well might read a lesson to the
devil,
And teach the old seducer new
temptations.

Old Play.

I SEE thee yet, fair France — thou
favored land
Of art and nature — thou art still
before me;
Thy sons, to whom their labor is a
sport,
So well thy grateful soil returns
its tribute;
Thy sunburnt daughters, with
their laughing eyes
And glossy raven-locks. But, fa-
vored France,
Thou hast had many a tale of woe
to tell,
In ancient times as now.

Anonymous.

HE was a son of Egypt, as he told
me,
And one descended from those
dread magicians
Who waged rash war, when Israel
dwelt in Goshen,
With Israel and her Prophet —
matching rod
With his the son of Levi's — and
encountering
Jehovah's miracles within canta-
tions,
Till upon Egypt came the aveng-
ing Angel,

And those proud sages wept for
their first-born,
As wept the unlettered peasant.

Anonymous.

RESCUE or none, Sir Knight, I am
your captive ;
Deal with me what your nobleness
suggests —
Thinking the chance of war may
one day place you
Where I must now be reckoned —
i' the roll
Of melancholy prisoners.

Anonymous.

No human quality is so well wove
In warp and woof but there 's
some flaw in it ;
I've known a brave man fly a
shepherd's cur,
A wise man so demean him driveling
idiocy
Had wellnigh been ashamed on 't.
For your crafty,
Your wordly-wise man, he, above
the rest,
Weaves his own snares so fine he's
often caught in them.

Old Play.

WHEN Princes meet, astrologers
may mark it
An ominous conjunction, full of
boding,
Like that of Mars with Saturn.

Old Play.

THY time is not yet out—the
devil thou servest
Has not as yet deserted thee. He
aids
The friends who drudge for him, as
the blind man
Was aided by the guide, who lent
his shoulder
O'er rough and smooth, until he
reached the brink
Of the fell precipice — then hurled
him downward.

Old Play.

OUR counsels waver like the un-
steady bark,
That reels amid the strife of meet-
ing currents.

Old Play.

HOLD fast thy truth, young sol-
dier. — Gentle maiden,
Keep you your promise plight —
leave age its subtleties,
And gray-haired policy its maze of
falsehood ;
But be you candid as the morning
sky,
Ere the high sun sucks vapors up
to stain it.

The Trial.

FROM SAINT RONAN'S WELL

QUIS novus hic hospes ?

Dido apud Virgilium.

CH'M-MAID ! — The Genman in the
front parlor !

*Boots's free Translation of the
Æneid.*

THERE must be government in all
society —
Bees have their Queen, and stag
herds have their leader ;
Rome had her Consuls, Athens
had her Archons,
And we, sir, have our Managing
Committee.

The Album of Saint Ronans.

COME, let me have thy council, for
I need it ;
Thou art of those, who better help
their friends
With sage advice, than usurers
with gold,
Or brawlers with their swords —
I'll trust to thee,
For I ask only from thee words,
not deeds.

The Devil hath met his Match.

NEAREST of blood should still be
 next in love ;
 And when I see these happy chil-
 dren playing,
 While William gathers flowers for
 Ellen's ringlets
 And Ellen dresses flies for Wil-
 liam's angle,
 I scarce can think that in advan-
 cing life
 Coldness, unkindness, interest, or
 suspicion
 Will e'er divide that unity so sac-
 cred,
 Which Nature bound at birth.

Anonymous.

OH ! you would be a vestal maid,
 I warrant,
 The bride of Heaven — Come — we
 may shake your purpose :
 For here I bring in hand a jolly
 suitor
 Hath ta'en degrees in the seven
 sciences
 That ladies love best — He is
 young and noble,
 Handsome and valiant, gay and
 rich, and liberal.

The Nun.

IT comes — it wrings me in my
 parting hour,
 The long-hid crime — the well-dis-
 guised guilt.
 Bring me some holy priest to lay
 the spectre !

Old Play.

SEDET POST EQUITEM ATRA
 CURA —

STILL though the headlong cava-
 lier,
 O'er rough and smooth, in wild
 career,
 Seems racing with the wind ;
 His sad companion — ghastly
 pale,

And darksome as a widow's veil,
 CARE — keeps her seat behind.

Horace.

WHAT sheeted ghost is wandering
 through the storm ?
 For never did a maid of middle
 earth
 Choose such a time or spot to vent
 her sorrows.

Old Play.

HERE come we to our close — for
 that which follows
 Is but the tale of dull, unvaried
 misery.
 Steep crags and headlong lins may
 court the pencil
 Like sudden haps, dark plots, and
 strange adventures ;
 But who would paint the dull and
 fog-wrapt moor
 In its long tract of sterile desola-
 tion ?

Old Play.

FROM THE BETROTHED

IN Madoc's tent the clarion
 sounds,
 With rapid clangor hurried far ;
 Each hill and dale the note re-
 bounds,
 But when return the sons of
 war ?
 Thou, born of stern Necessity,
 Dull Peace ! the valley yields
 to thee,
 And owns thy melancholy
 sway.

Welsh Poem.

O, SADLY shines the morning
 sun
 On leaguered castle wall,
 When bastion, tower, and battle-
 ment
 Seem nodding to their fall.

Old Ballad.

Now, all ye ladies of fair Scotland,
 And ladies of England that
 happy would prove,
 Marry never for houses, nor marry
 for land,
 Nor marry for nothing but only
 love.

Family Quarrels.

Too much rest is rust,
 There's ever cheer in chang-
 ing;

We tyne by too much trust,
 So we'll be up and ranging.

Old Song.

RING out the merry bells, the
 bride approaches.
 The blush upon her cheek has
 shamed the morning,
 For that is dawning palely. Grant,
 good saints,
 These clouds betoken naught of
 evil omen!

Old Play.

Julia.

Gentle sir,

You are our captive — but we'll
 use you so,
 That you shall think your prison
 joys may match
 Whate'er your liberty hath known
 of pleasure.

Roderick. No, fairest, we have
 trifled here too long:

And, lingering to see your roses
 blossom,

I've let my laurels wither.

Old Play.

FROM THE TALISMAN

THIS is the Prince of Leeches;
 fever, plague,
 Cold rheum, and hot podagra, do
 but look on him,
 And quit their grasp upon the tor-
 tured sinews.

Anonymous.

ONE thing is certain in our
 Northern land,

Allow that birth or valor, wealth
 or wit,

Give each precedence to their
 possessor,

Envy, that follows on such emi-
 nence

As comes the lyme-hound on the
 roebuck's trace,

Shall pull them down each one.

Sir David Lindsay.

YOU talk of Gayety and Inno-
 cence!

The moment when the fatal fruit
 was eaten,

They parted ne'er to meet again;
 and Malice

Has ever since been playmate to
 light Gayety,

From the first moment when the
 smiling infant

Destroys the flower or butterfly
 he toys with,

To the last chuckle of the dying
 miser,

Who on his death-bed laughs his
 last to hear

His wealthy neighbor has become
 a bankrupt.

Old Play.

'T is not her sense — for sure, in
 that

There's nothing more than com-
 mon;

And all her wit is only chat,

Like any other woman.

Song.

WERE every hair upon his head a
 life,

And every life were to be suppli-
 cated

By numbers equal to those hairs
 quadrupled,

Life after life should out like wan-
 ing stars

Before the daybreak — or as fes-
 tive lamps,

Which have lent lustre to the mid-
night revel,
Each after each are quenched
when guests depart.

Old Play.

MUST we then sheathe our still
victorious sword;
Turn back our forward step, which
ever trode
O'er foemen's necks the onward
path of glory;
Unclasp the mail, which with a
solemn vow
In God's own house we hung upon
our shoulders;
That vow, as unaccomplished as
the promise
Which village nurses make to still
their children,
And after think no more of?

The Crusade, a Tragedy.

WHEN beauty leads the lion in
her toils,
Such are her charms he dare not
raise his mane,
Far less expand the terror of his
fangs;
So great Alcides made his club a
distaff,
And spun to please fair Omphale.

Anonymous.

MID these wild scenes Enchant-
ment waves her hand,
To change the face of the myste-
rious land;
Till the bewildering scenes around
us seem
The vain productions of a feverish
dream.

Astolpho, a Romance.

A GRAIN of dust
Soiling our cup, will make our
sense reject
Fastidiously the draught which we
did thirst for;
A rusted nail, placed near the
faithful compass,

Will sway it from the truth and
wreck the argosy.

Even this small cause of anger
and disgust

Will break the bonds of amity
'mongst princes

And wreck their noblest purposes.
The Crusade.

THE tears I shed must ever fall!
I weep not for an absent swain,
For time may happier hours re-
call,
And parted lovers meet again.

I weep not for the silent dead,
Their pains are past, their sor-
rows o'er,
And those that loved their steps
must tread,
When death shall join to part
no more.

But worse than absence, worse
than death,
She wept her lover's sullied fame,
And, fired with all the pride of
birth,
She wept a soldier's injured
name.

Ballad.

FROM WOODSTOCK

COME forth, old man — thy daugh-
ter's side

Is now the fitting place for thee:
When Time hath quelled the oak's
bold pride,

The youthful tendril yet may hide
The ruins of the parent tree.

Now, ye wild blades, that make
loose inns your stage,

To vapor forth the acts of this sad
age,

Stout Edgehill fight, the Newber-
ries and the West,

And northern clashes, where you
still fought best;

Your strange escapes, your dangers
void of fear,
When bullets flew between the
head and ear,
Whether you fought by Damme or
the Spirit,
Of you I speak.

Legend of Captain Jones.

YON path of greensward
Winds round by sparry grot and
gay pavilion;
There is no flint to gall thy tender
foot,
There's ready shelter from each
breeze or shower. —
But Duty guides not that way —
see her stand,
With wand entwined with ama-
ranth, near yon cliffs.
Oft where she leads thy blood
must mark thy footsteps,
Oft where she leads thy head must
bear the storm,
And thy shrunk form endure heat,
cold, and hunger;
But she will guide thee up to noble
heights,
Which he who gains seems native
of the sky,
While earthly things lie stretched
beneath his feet,
Diminished, shrunk, and value-
less —

Anonymous.

MY tongue pads slowly under this
new language,
And starts and stumbles at these
uncouth phrases.
They may be great in worth and
weight, but hang
Upon the native glibness of my
language
Like Saul's plate-armor on the
shepherd boy,
Encumbering and not arming him.

J. B.

HERE we have one head
Upon two bodies — your two-
headed bullock

Is but an ass to such a prodigy.
These two have but one meaning,
thought, and counsel;
And when the single noddle has
spoke out,
The four legs scrape assent to it.
Old Play.

DEEDS are done on earth
Which have their punishment ere
the earth closes
Upon the perpetrators. Be it the
working
Of the remorse-stirred fancy, or
the vision,
Distinct and real, of unearthly
being,
All ages witness that beside the
couch
Of the fell homicide oft stalks
the ghost
Of him he slew, and shows the
shadowy wound.

Old Play.

WE do that in our zeal
Our calmer moments are afraid to
answer.

Anonymous.

THE deadliest snakes are those
which, twined 'mongst flow-
ers,
Blend their bright coloring with
the varied blossoms,
Their fierce eyes glittering like
the spangled dew-drop;
In all so like what nature has
most harmless,
That sportive innocence, which
dreads no danger,
Is poisoned unawares.

Old Play.

FROM CHRONICLES OF THE
CANONGATE

WERE ever such two loving
friends! —
How could they disagree?

O, THUS it was: he loved him
dear,

And thought but to requite him;
And, having no friend left but he,
He did resolve to fight him.

Duke upon Duke.

THERE are times
When Fancy plays her gambols,
in despite
Even of our watchful senses, when
in sooth
Substance seems shadow, shadow
substance seems,
When the broad, palpable, and
marked partition
'Twixt that which is and is not,
seems dissolved,
As if the mental eye gained power
to gaze
Beyond the limits of the existing
world.
Such hours of shadowy dreams I
better love
Than all the gross realities of life.

Anonymous.

FROM THE FAIR MAID OF PERTH

THE ashes here of murdered kings
Beneath my footsteps sleep;
And yonder lies the scene of death
Where Mary learned to weep.

Captain Marjoribanks.

'BEHOLD the Tiber!' the vain
Roman cried,
Viewing the ample Tay from Baig-
lie's side;
But where 's the Scot that would
the vaunt repay,
And hail the puny Tiber for the
Tay.

Anonymous.

FAIR is the damsel, passing fair —
Sunny at distance gleams her
smile!

Approach — the cloud of woful
care

Hangs trembling in her eye the
while.

Lucinda, a Ballad.

O FOR a draught of power to
steep
The soul of agony in sleep!

Bertha.

Lo! where he lies embalmed in
gore,

His wound to Heaven cries;
The floodgates of his blood im-
plore

For vengeance from the skies.

Uranus and Psyche.

FROM ANNE OF GEIER- STEIN

CURSED be the gold and silver
which persuade
Weak man to follow far fatiguing
trade.

The lily, peace, outshines the sil-
ver store,
And life is dearer than the golden
ore.

Yet money tempts us o'er the des-
ert brown
To every distant mart and wealthy
town.

Hassan, or the Camel Driver.

I WAS one
Who loved the greenwood bank
and lowing herd,
The russet prize, the lowly peas-
ant's life,
Seasoned with sweet content, more
than the halls
Where revellers feast to fever-
height. Believe me,
There ne'er was poison mixed in
maple bowl.

Anonymous.

WHEN we two meet, we meet like
rushing torrents;
Like warring winds, like flames
from various points,
That mate each other's fury —
there is naught
Of elemental strife, were fiends to
guide it,
Can match the wrath of man.

Frenaud.

WE know not when we sleep nor
when we wake.
Visions distinct and perfect cross
our eye,
Which to the slumberer seem
realities;
And while they waked, some men
have seen such sights
As set at naught the evidence of
sense,
And left them well persuaded they
were dreaming.

Anonymous.

THESE be the adept's doctrines —
every element
Is peopled with its separate race
of spirits.
The airy Sylphs on the blue ether
float;
Deep in the earthy cavern skulks
the Gnome;
The sea-green Naiad skims the
ocean-billow,
And the fierce fire is yet a friendly
home
To its peculiar sprite — the Sala-
mander.

Anonymous.

UPON the Rhine, upon the Rhine
they cluster,
The grapes of juice divine,
Which make the soldier's jovial
courage muster;
O, blessed be the Rhine!

Drinking Song.

TELL me not of it — I could ne'er
abide
The mummery of all that forced
civility.
'Pray, seat yourself, my lord.'
With cringing hams
The speech is spoken, and with
bended knee
Heard by the smiling courtier, —
'Before you, sir?
It must be on the earth, then.'
Hang it all!
The pride which cloaks itself in
such poor fashion
Is scarcely fit to swell a beggar's
bosom.

Old Play.

A MIRTHFUL man he was — the
snows of age
Fell, but they did not chill him.
Gayety,
Even in life's closing, touched his
teeming brain
With such wild visions as the set-
ting sun
Raises in front of some hoar
glacier,
Painting the bleak ice with a thou-
sand hues.

Old Play.

AY, this is he who wears the
wreath of bays
Wove by Apollo and the Sisters
Nine,
Which Jove's dread lightning
scathes not. He hath doft
The cumbrous helm of steel, and
flung aside
The yet more galling diadem of
gold;
While, with a leafy circlet round
his brows,
He reigns the King of Lovers and
of Poets.

WANT you a man
Experienced in the world and its
affairs?

Here he is for your purpose. —
 He's a monk.
 He hath forsworn the world and
 all its work —
 The rather that he knows it pass-
 ing well,
 'Special the worst of it, for he's a
 monk.

Old Play.

TOLL, toll the bell!
 Greatness is o'er,
 The heart has broke,
 To ache no more;
 An unsubstantial pageant all —
 Drop o'er the scene the funeral
 pall.

Old Poem.

HERE 's a weapon now
 Shall shake a conquering general
 in his tent,
 A monarch on his throne, or reach
 a prelate,
 However holy be his offices,
 E'en while he serves the altar.

Old Play.

FROM COUNT ROBERT OF PARIS

Othus. This superb successor
 Of the earth's mistress, as thou
 vainly speakest,
 Stands midst these ages as, on the
 wide ocean,
 The last spared fragment of a
 spacious land,
 That in some grand and awful
 ministration
 Of mighty nature has engulfed
 been,
 Doth lift aloft its dark and rocky
 cliffs
 O'er the wild waste around, and
 sadly frowns
 In lonely majesty.

*Constantine Paleologus,
 Scene I.*

HERE, youth, thy foot unbrace,
 Here, youth, thy brow un-
 braid,
 Each tribute that may grace
 The threshold here be paid.
 Walk with the stealthy pace
 Which Nature teaches deer,
 When, echoing in the chase,
 The hunter's horn they hear.

The Court.

THE storm increases — 't is no
 sunny shower,
 Fostered in the moist breast of
 March or April,
 Or such as parched Summer cools
 his lip with;
 Heaven's windows are flung wide;
 the inmost deeps
 Call in hoarse greeting one upon
 another;
 On comes the flood in all its foam-
 ing horrors,
 And where 's the dike shall stop
 it!

The Deluge, a Poem.

VAIN man! thou mayst esteem
 thy love as fair
 As fond hyperboles suffice to
 raise.
 She may be all that's matchless
 in her person,
 And all-divine in soul to match
 her body;
 But take this from me — thou
 shalt never call her
 Superior to her sex while *one* sur-
 vives
 And I am her true votary.

Old Play.

THROUGH the vain webs which
 puzzle sophists' skill,
 Plain sense and honest meaning
 work their way;
 So sink the varying clouds upon
 the hill
 When the clear dawning bright-
 ens into day.

Dr. Watts.

BETWEEN the foaming jaws of
the white torrent
The skilful artist draws a sudden
mound;
By level long he subdivides their
strength,
Stealing the waters from their
rocky bed,
First to diminish what he means
to conquer;
Then, for the residue he forms a
road,
Easy to keep, and painful to de-
sert,
And guiding to the end the planner
aimed at.

The Engineer.

THESE were wild times — the an-
tipodes of ours:
Ladies were there who oftener
saw themselves
In the broad lustre of a foeman's
shield
Than in a mirror, and who rather
sought
To match themselves in battle
than in dalliance
To meet a lover's onset. — But
though Nature
Was outraged thus, she was not
overcome.

Feudal Times.

WITHOUT a ruin, broken, tangled,
cumbrous,
Within it was a little paradise,
Where Taste had made her dwell-
ing. Statuary,
First-born of human art, moulded
her images
And bade men mark and worship.

Anonymous.

THE parties met. The wily, wordy
Greek,
Weighing each word, and canvass-
ing each syllable,
Evading, arguing, equivocating.
And the stern Frank came with
his two-hand sword,

Watching to see which way the
balance sways,
That he may throw it in and turn
the scales.

Palestine.

STRANGE ape of man! who loathes
thee while he scorns thee;
Half a reproach to us and half a
jest.
What fancies can be ours ere we
have pleasure
In viewing our own form, our pride
and passions,
Reflected in a shape grotesque as
thine!

Anonymous.

'T is strange that in the dark sul-
phureous mine
Where wild ambition piles its rip-
ening stores
Of slumbering thunder, Love will
interpose
His tiny torch, and cause the stern
explosion
To burst when the deviser's least
aware.

Anonymous.

ALL is prepared — the chambers
of the mine
Are crammed with the combusti-
ble, which, harmless
While yet unkindled as the sable
sand,
Needs but a spark to change its
nature so
That he who wakes it from its
slumbrous mood
Dreads scarce the explosion less
than he who knows
That 't is his towers which meet
its fury.

Anonymous.

HEAVEN knows its time; the bul-
let has its billet,
Arrow and javelin each its de-
stined purpose;

The fated beasts of Nature's lower
strain

Have each their separate task.

Old Play.

FROM CASTLE DANGEROUS

A TALE of sorrow, for your eyes
may weep;

A tale of horror, for your flesh may
tingle;

A tale of wonder, for the eyebrows
arch,

And the flesh curdles if you read
it rightly.

Old Play.

WHERE is he? Has the deep
earth swallowed him?

Or hath he melted like some airy
phantom

That shuns the approach of morn
and the young sun?

Or hath he wrapt him in Cimmerian
darkness,

And passed beyond the circuit of
the sight

With things of the night's shadows?

Anonymous.

THE way is long, my children, long
and rough—

The moors are dreary and the
woods are dark;

But he that creeps from cradle on
to grave,

Unskilled save in the velvet course
of fortune,

Hath missed the discipline of noble
hearts.

Old Play.

His talk was of another world—
his bodements

Strange, doubtful, and mysterious;
those who heard him

Listened as to a man in feverish
dreams,

Who speaks of other objects than
the present,

And mutters like to him who sees
a vision.

Old Play.

CRY the wild war-note, let the
champions pass,

Do bravely each, and God defend
the right;

Upon Saint Andrew thrice can
they thus cry,

And thrice they shout on height,

And then marked them on the
Englishmen,

As I have told you right.

Saint George the bright, our ladies'
knight,

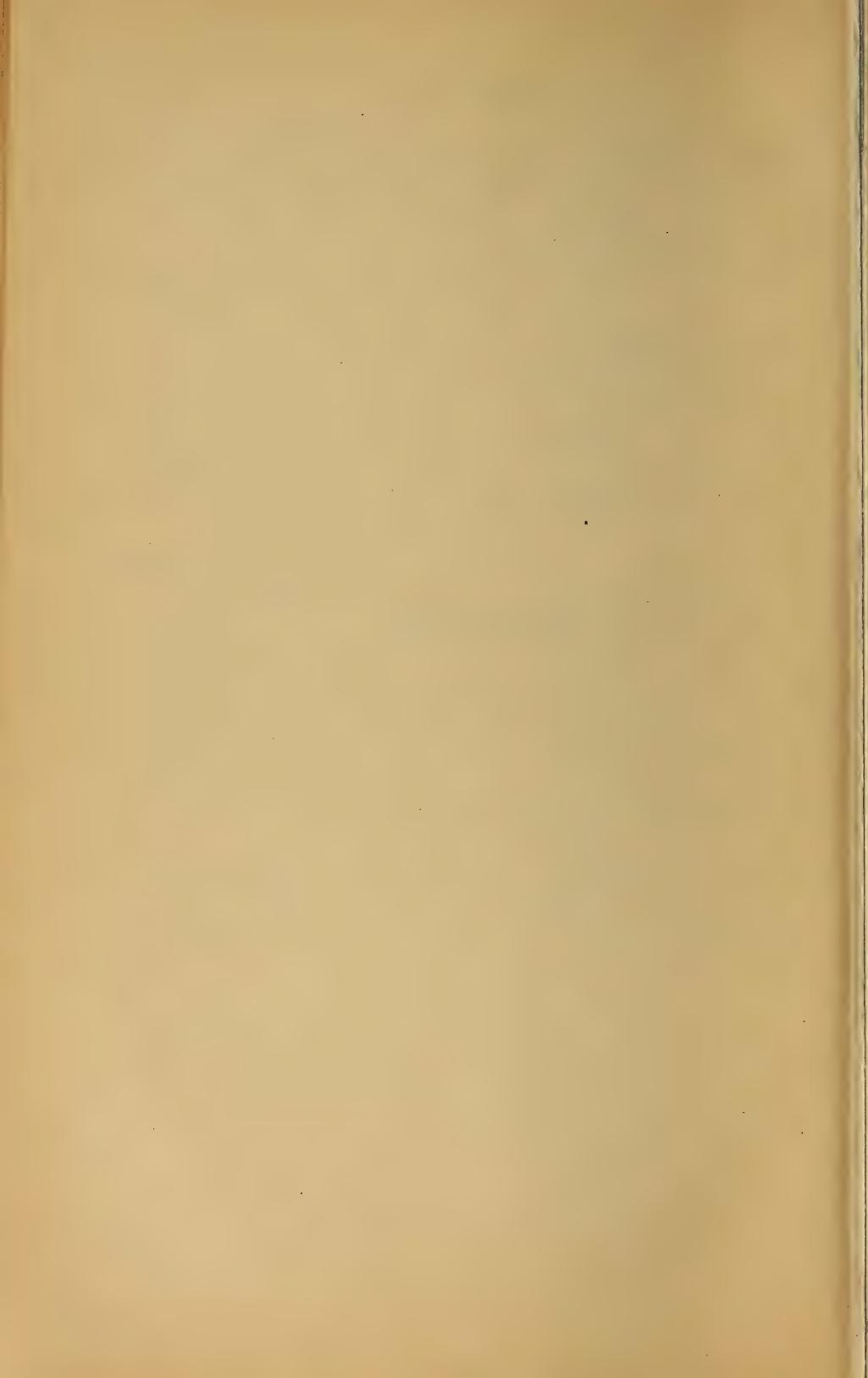
To name they were full fain;

Our Englishmen they cried on
height,

And thrice they shout again.

Old Ballad.

INDEXES



INDEX OF FIRST LINES

[Including the first lines of songs contained in the longer poems.]

- A CAT of yore — or else old Æsop
lied, — 593.
- A courtier extraordinary, who by diet,
662.
- A grain of dust, 678.
- A mirthful man he was — the snows of
age, 681.
- A priest, ye cry, a priest! — lame shep-
herds they, 661.
- A tale of sorrow, for your eyes may
weep, 684.
- A weary month has wandered o'er, 570.
- Admire not that I gained the prize, 649.
- Ah! County Guy, the hour is nigh, 633.
- Ah! mark the matron well — and laugh
not, Harry, 669.
- Ah, poor Louise! the livelong day, 644.
- All is prepared — the chambers of the
mine, 683.
- All joy was bereft me the day that you
left me, 548.
- All your ancient customs, 667.
- Allen-a-Dale has no fagot for burning,
338.
- Amid these aisles where once his pre-
cepts showed, 552.
- An hour with thee! When earliest
day, 643.
- And art thou cold and lowly laid, 277.
- And be he safe restored ere evening
set, 657.
- And did ye not hear of a mirth befell,
563.
- And Need and Misery, Vice and Dan-
ger, bind, 658.
- And ne'er but once, my son, he says, 27.
- And some for safety took the dreadful
leap, 674.
- And when Love's torch has set the
heart in flame, 664.
- And whither would you lead me then,
363.
- And you shall deal the funeral dole, 624.
- Anna-Marie, love, up is the sun, 608.
- Approach the chamber, look upon his
bed, 660.
- Arouse thee, youth! — it is no common
call, — 656.
- Arouse the tiger of Hyrcanian deserts,
660.
- As lords their laborers' hire delay, 636.
- As the worn war-horse, at the trum-
pet's sound, 590.
- As, to the Autumn breeze's bugle-
sound, 653.
- Assist me, ye friends of Old Books and
Old Wine, 632.
- At school I knew him — a sharp-witted
youth, 663.
- Autumn departs — but still its mantle's
fold, 421.
- Ave Maria!* maiden mild! 237.
- Away! our journey lies through dell
and dingle, 659.
- Ay, Pedro, come you here with mask
and lantern, 665.
- Ay, sir — our ancient crown, in these
wild times, 665.
- Ay, sir, the clouded shoe hath oft times
craft in 't, 669.
- Ay, this is he who wears the wreath of
bays, 681.
- 'Behold the Tiber!' the vain Roman
cried, 680.
- Between the foaming jaws of the white
torrent, 683.
- Bid not thy fortune troll upon the
wheels, 669.
- Birds of omen dark and foul, 604.
- Bold knights and fair dames, to my
harp give an ear, 23.
- Bring the bowl which you boast, 643.
- But follow, follow me, 568.

By pathless march, by greenwood tree,
642.

By this good light, a wench of match-
less metal, 671.

Canny moment, lucky fit, 576.

Can she not speak, 672.

Carle, now the King's come, 629.

Champion famed for warlike toil, 625.

Ch'm-maid! — The Genman in the front
parlor, 675.

Come forth, old man — thy daughter's
side, 678.

Come hither, young one — Mark me!
Thou art now, 670.

Come, let me have thy council, for I
need it, 675.

Come, Lucy, while 't is morning hour,
384.

Contentions fierce, 673.

Cry the wild war-note, let the cham-
pions pass, 684.

Cursed be the gold and silver which
persuade, 680.

Dark Ahriman, whom Irak still, 639.

Dark on their journey loured the
gloomy day, 659.

Dark shall be light, 577.

Dear John, — I some time ago wrote to
inform his, 636.

Death distant? — No, alas! he's ever
with us, 664.

Death finds us mid our play-things —
snatches us, 671.

Deeds are done on earth, 679.

Dinas Emlinn, lament; for the moment
is nigh, 546.

Dire was his thought who first in poi-
son steeped, 657.

Donald Caird's come again, 594.

Dust unto dust, 609.

Emblem of England's ancient faith,
567.

Enchantress, farewell, who so oft has
decoyed me, 628.

Fair Brussels, thou art far behind, 497.

Fair is the damsel, passing fair, 680.

Far as the eye could reach no tree was
seen, 657.

Far in the bosom of the deep, 560.

Fare thee well, thou Holly green! 616.
Farewell! farewell! the voice you hear,
623.

Farewell, merry maidens, to song and
to laugh, 623.

Farewell to Mackenneth, great Earl of
the North, 569.

Farewell to Northmaven, 618.

Farewell to the land where the clouds
love to rest, 657.

Fathoms deep beneath the wave, 619.

For all our men were very very merry,
635.

For leagues along the watery way, 620.
Forget thee! No! my worthy fere! 643.

Fortune, my Foe, why dost thou frown
on me? 651.

Fortune, you say, flies from us — She
but circles, 656.

Frederick leaves the land of France,
31.

From heavy dreams fair Helen rose, 1.
From the brown crest of Newark its
summons extending, 575.

From thy Pomeranian throne, 519.

Gentle sir, You are our captive, 677.

Give me a morsel on the greensward
rather, 664.

Give us good voyage, gentle stream —
we stun not, 671.

Give way — give way — I must and will
have justice, 670.

Glowing with love, on fire for fame,
574.

Good evening, Sir Priest, and so late as
you ride, 611.

Go sit old Cheviot's crest below, 30.

Hail to the Chief who in triumph ad-
vances! 218.

Hail to thy cold and clouded beam, 315.
Happy thou art! then happy be, 658.

Hark! the bells summon and the bu-
gle calls, 666.

Harp of the North, farewell! The
hills grow dark, 282.

Harp of the North? that mouldering
long hast hung, 199.

Hawk and osprey screamed for joy,
522.

He came amongst them like a new-
raised spirit, 674.

- He came — but valor had so fired his
 eye, 581.
 He is gone to the mountain, 232.
 He strikes no coin, 't is true, but coins
 new phrases, 662.
 He was a fellow in a peasant's garb,
 673.
 He was a man Versed in the world as
 pilot in his compass, 665.
 He was a son of Egypt, as he told me,
 674.
 He whose heart for vengeance sued, 615.
 Health to the chieftain from his clans-
 man true ! 560.
 Hear what Highland Nora said, 579.
 Heaven knows its time ; the bullet has
 its billet, 683.
 Heir lyeth John o' ye Girnell, 581.
 Here come we to our close — for that
 which follows, 676.
 Here has been such a stormy encounter,
 654.
 Here is a father now, 658.
 Here 's a weapon now, 682.
 Here stand I tight and trim, 674.
 Here stands the victim — there the
 proud betrayer, 666.
 Here we have one head, 679.
 Here, youth, thy foot unbrace, 682.
 High deeds achieved of knightly fame,
 605.
 High feasting was there there — the
 gilded roofs, 674.
 High o'er the eastern steep the sun is
 beaming, 666.
 His talk was of another world — his
 bodements, 684.
 Hither we come, 651.
 Hold fast thy truth, young soldier —
 Gentle maiden, 675.
 How fares the man on whom good men
 would look, 672.
 I asked of my harp, ' Who hath injured
 thy chords ? ' 638.
 I beseech you, — 658.
 I climbed the dark brow of the mighty
 Hellvellyn, 47.
 I do love these ancient ruins, 667.
 I fear the devil worst when gown and
 cassock, 673.
 I knew Anselmo. He was shrewd and
 prudent, 653.
 I'll give thee, good fellow, a twelve-
 month or twain, 606.
 I'll walk on tiptoe; arm my eye with
 caution, 662.
 I see thee yet, fair France — thou fa-
 vored land, 674.
 I strive like to the vessel in the tide-
 way, 668.
 I was a wild and wayward boy, 359.
 I was one, 680.
 If you fail honor here, 654.
 Ill fares the bark with tackle riven,
 524.
 In awful ruins Ætna thunders nigh, 653.
 In Madoc's tent the clarion sounds, 676.
 In respect that your Grace has com-
 missioned a Kraken, 562.
 In some breasts passion lies concealed
 and silent, 664.
 In the wide pile, by others heeded not,
 657.
 In the wild storm. The seaman hews
 his mast down, 663.
 Indifferent, but indifferent — pshaw !
 he doth it not, 662.
 Is this thy castle, Baldwin ? Melan-
 choly, 659.
 It comes — it wrings me in my parting
 hour, 676.
 It chanced that Cupid on a season, 575.
 It is and is not — 't is the thing I sought
 for, 664.
 It is not texts will do it — Church artil-
 lery, 663.
 It is time of danger, not of revel, 665.
 It's up Glembarchan's braes I gaed,
 564.
 It was a little naughty page, 11.
 It was an English ladye bright, 94.
 It was Dunois, the young and brave,
 was bound for Palestine, 574.
 Joy to the victors, the sons of old As-
 pen, 11.
 Late, when the autumn evening fell,
 564.
 Law, take thy victim ! — May she find
 the mercy, 658.
 Let the proud salmon gorge the feath-
 ered hook, 670.
 Let those go see who will — I like it
 not, 656.

- Life ebbs from such old age, unmarked
and silent, 655.
- Life hath its May, and all is mirthful
then, 663.
- Life, with you, Glows in the brain and
dances in the arteries, 655.
- Lives there a strain whose sounds of
mounting fire, 283.
- Lord William was born in gilded bower,
515.
- Look not thou on beauty's charming,
603.
- Look round thee, young Astolpho:
Here's the place, 657.
- Loud o'er my head though awful thun-
ders roll, 653.
- Love wakes and weeps, 623.
- Lo! where he lies embalmed in gore,
680.
- Macleod's wizard flag from the gray
castle sallies, 593.
- Maiden whose sorrows wail the Living
Dead, 615.
- Many great ones Would part with half
their states, 654.
- March, march, Ettrick and Teviotdale,
610.
- Marry, come up, sir, with your gentle
blood, 672.
- Measures of good and evil, 647.
- Merrily swim we, the moon shines
bright, 610.
- Merry it is in the good greenwood, 243.
- Mid these wild scenes Enchantment
waves her hands, 678.
- Mother darksome, Mother dread, 621.
- Must we then sheath our still victorious
sword, 678.
- My hawk is tired of perch and hood,
278.
- My hounds may a' rin masterless, 656.
- My tongue pads slowly under this new
language, 679.
- My wayward fate I needs must plain,
552.
- Nay, dally not with time, the wise
man's treasure, 661.
- Nay, hear me, brother—I am elder,
wiser, 663.
- Nay, let me have the friends who eat
my victuals, 661.
- Nearest of blood should still be next in
love, 676.
- Necessity—thou best of peace-makers,
673.
- Night and morning were at meeting, 571.
- No human quality is so well wove, 675.
- No, sir, I will not pledge—I'm one of
those, 672.
- Norman saw on English oak, 606.
- Not serve two masters?—Here's a
youth will try it, 665.
- Not the wild billow, when it breaks its
barrier, 663.
- November's hail-cloud drifts away, 604.
- November's sky is chill and drear, 101.
- Now, all ye ladies of Scotland, 677.
- Now bid the steeple rock—she comes,
she comes, 666.
- Now, by Our Lady, Sheriff, 't is hard
reckoning, 662.
- Now choose thee, gallant, betwixt
wealth and honor, 662.
- Now fare thee well, my master, if true
service, 666.
- Now God be good to me in this wild
pilgrimage, 665.
- Now, hoist the anchor, mates—and
let the sails, 673.
- Now let us sit in conclave. That these
weeds, 661.
- Now on my faith this gear is all entan-
gled, 663.
- Now Scot and English are agreed, 668.
- O ay! the Monks, the Monks, they did
the mischief! 660.
- O, Brignall banks are wild and fair, 333.
- O, dread was the time, and more
dreadful the omen, 558.
- O for a draught of power to steep, 680.
- O for a glance of that gay Muse's eye,
582.
- O for the voice of that wild horn, 591.
- O hone a rie! O hone a rie! 13.
- O, hush thee, my babe, thy sire was a
knight, 577.
- O, I do know him—'t is the mouldy
lemmon, 669.
- O, lady, twine no wreath for me, 357.
- O listen, listen, ladies gay! 97.
- O, lovers' eyes are sharp to see, 548.
- O, low shone the sun on the fair lake
of Toro, 547.

- O maid of Isla from the cliff, 627.
 O, open the door, some pity to show,
 547.
 O, sadly shines the morning sun, 676.
 O, say not, my love, with that mortified
 air, 551.
 O, tell me, Harper, wherefore flow, 557.
 O, thus it was : he loved him dear, 680.
 O, who rides by night thro' the wood-
 land so wild ? 9.
 O, will ye hear a knightly tale of old
 Bohemian day, 599.
 O, will ye hear a mirthful bound ? 36.
 Of all the birds on bush or tree, 616.
 Of yore, in old England, it was not
 thought good, 636.
 Oh, I'm come to the Low Country,
 644.
 Oh ! young Lochinvar is come out of
 the west, 165.
 Oh ! you would be a vestal maid, I war-
 rant, 676.
 On Ettrick Forest's mountains dun,
 627.
 On Hallow-Mass Eve, ere you boun-
 ye to rest, 565.
 Once again, — but how changed since
 my wanderings began, 577.
 One thing is certain in our Northern
 land, 677.
 Our counsels waver like the unsteady
 bark, 675.
 Our vicar still preaches that Peter and
 Poule, 269.
 Over the mountains and under the
 waves, 668.
 Painters show Cupid blind — hath Hy-
 men eyes ? 674.
 Parental love, my friend, has power
 o'er wisdom, 668.
 Pibroch of Donuil Dhu, 578.
 Plain as her native dignity of mind,
 603.
 Poor sinners whom the snake deceives,
 627.
 Quake to your foundation deep, 418.
 Rash adventurer, bear thee back, 413.
 Red glows the forge in Striguil's
 bounds, 546.
 Remorse — she ne'er forsakes us ! 655.
 Rescue or none, Sir Knight, I am your
 captive, 675.
 Ring out the merry bells, the bride ap-
 proaches, 677.
 Say not my art is fraud — all live by
 seeming, 660.
 See the treasure Merlin piled, 415.
 See yonder woman, whom our swains
 revere, 667.
 She does no work by halves, yon raving
 ocean, 667.
 'She may be fair,' he sang, 'but yet,'
 525.
 Since here we are set in array round
 the table, 549.
 Sir, stay at home and take an old man's
 counsel, 658.
 So sung the old bard in the grief of
 his heart, 570.
 So, while the Goose, of whom the fable
 told, 656.
 Soft spread the southern summer night,
 571.
 Soldier, rest ! thy warfare o'er, 210.
 Soldier, wake ! the day is peeping, 637.
 Sometimes he thinks that Heaven this
 vision sent, 654.
 Son of a witch, 643.
 Son of Honor, theme of story, 417.
 Sound, sound the clarion, fill the fife !
 657.
 Speak not of niceness, when there's
 chance for wreck, 673.
 Staffa, sprung from high Macdonald,
 559.
 Stern eagle of the far Northwest, 617.
 Stern was the law which bade its vota-
 ries leave, 660.
 Still in his dead hand clenched remain
 the strings, 655.
 Still though the headlong cavalier, 676.
 Strange ape of man ! who loathes thee
 while he scorns thee, 683.
 Summer eve is gone and past, 354.
 Sweet shone the sun on the fair lake of
 Toro, 12.
 Take these flowers which, purple
 waving, 9.
 Take thou no scorn, 609.
 Tell me not of it, friend — when the
 young weep, 654.

- Tell me not of it — I could ne'er abide,
681.
- That's right, friend — drive the gait-
lings back, 633.
- The ashes here of murdered kings, 680.
- The Baron of Smaylho'me rose with
day, 18.
- The bleakest rock upon the loneliest
heath, 656.
- The course of human life is changeful
still, 673.
- The deadliest snakes are those which,
twined 'mongst flowers, 679.
- The Druid Urien had daughters seven,
531.
- The forest of Glenmore is drear, 46.
- The hearth in hall was black and dead,
658.
- The heath this night must be my bed,
235.
- The herring loves the merry moon-
light, 581.
- The hottest horse will oft be cool, 659.
- The Knight's to the mountain, 564.
- The last of our steers on the board has
been spread, 647.
- The Lord Abbot had a soul, 654.
- The Minstrel came once more to view,
273.
- The monk must arise when the matins
ring, 603.
- The moon is in her summer glow, 302.
- The moon's on the lake and the mist's
on the brae, 579.
- The news has flown frae mouth to
mouth, 629.
- The parties met. The wily, wordy
Greek, 683.
- The Pope he was saying the high, high
mass, 21.
- The sacred tapers' lights are gone,
663.
- The sages — for authority, pray, look,
635.
- The sound of Rokeby's words I hear,
361.
- The storm increases — 't is no sunny
shower, 682.
- The sun is rising dimly red, 619.
- The sun upon the lake is low, 648.
- The sun upon the Weirclaw Hill, 591.
- The tears I shed must ever fall, 678.
- The violet in her greenwood bower, 9.
- The way is long, my children, long and
rough — 684.
- The way was long, the wind was cold,
48.
- The Wildgrave winds his bugle-horn, 5.
- The wisest sovereigns err like private
men, 666.
- There are times, 680.
- There came three merry men from
south, west, and north, 609.
- There is a mood of mind we all have
known, 506.
- There is mist on the mountain, and
night on the vale, 566.
- There must be government in all so-
ciety — 675.
- There's something in that ancient
superstition, 661.
- These be the adept's doctrines — every
element, 681.
- These were wild times — the antipodes
of ours, 683.
- They bid me sleep, they bid me pray,
247.
- Things needful we have thought on ;
but the thing, 669.
- This is a gentle trader and a prudent,
667.
- This is a lecturer so skilled in policy,
674.
- This is a love meeting ? See the maid-
en mourns, 672.
- This is he Who rides on the court-
gale, 665.
- This is rare news thou tell'st me, my
good fellow, 665.
- This is some creature of the elements,
673.
- This is the day when the fairy kind, 613.
- This is the Prince of Leeches ; fever,
plague, 677.
- This is the very barn-yard, 670.
- This, sir, is one among the Seigniori,
668.
- This superb successor, 682.
- This wandering race, severed from
other men, 659.
- This was the entry, then these stairs
— but whither after ? 659.
- This way lie safety and a sure retreat,
671.
- Those evening clouds, that setting
ray, 653.

- Thou hast each secret of the house-
hold, Francis, 663.
- Thou who seek'st my fountain lone,
616.
- Though right be aft put down by
strength, 568.
- Thrice to the holly brake, 612.
- Through the vain webs, which puzzle
sophists' skill, 682.
- Thy time is not yet out — the devil thou
servest, 675.
- 'T is a weary life this — 664.
- 'T is not alone the scene — the man,
Anselmo, 667.
- 'T is not her sense — for sure, in that,
677.
- 'T is strange that in the dark sulphure-
ous mine, 683.
- 'T is sweet to hear expiring Summer's
sigh, 553.
- 'T is the black ban-dog of our jail —
pray look on him, 673.
- 'T is when the wound is stiffening with
the cold, 662.
- Toll, toll the bell ! 682.
- To horse ! to horse ! the standard flies,
10.
- To man in this his trial state, 657.
- To the Lords of Convention 't was
Claver'se who spoke, 649.
- To youth, to age, alike, this tablet pale,
648.
- Too much rest is rust, 677.
- Traquair has ridden up Chapel-hope, 38.
- True-love, an thou be true, 658.
- True Thomas sat on Huntlie bank, 40.
- Trust me, each state must have its
policies, 660.
- 'T was a Maréchal of France, and he
fain would honor gain, 557.
- 'T was All-souls' eve, and Surrey's heart
beat high, 95.
- 'T was near the fair city of Benevent,
640.
- 'T was time and griefs, 656.
- 'T was when among our linden-trees,
596.
- Twist ye, twine ye ! even so, 576.
- Upon the Rhine, upon the Rhine they
cluster, 681.
- Up rose the sun o'er moor and mead,
645.
- Vain man, thou mayst esteem thy love
as fair, 682.
- Viewless Essence, thin and bare, 645.
- Waken, lords and ladies gay, 551.
- Want you a man, 681.
- Wasted, weary, wherefore stay, 576.
- We are bound to drive the bullocks,
568.
- We are not worse at once — the course
of evil, 672.
- We do that in our zeal, 679.
- We know not when we sleep nor when
we wake, 681.
- We'll keep our customs — what is law
itself, 667.
- We love the shrill trumpet, we love
the drum's rattle, 649.
- We meet, as men see phantoms in a
dream, 673.
- Welcome, grave stranger, to our green
retreats, 553.
- Well, then, our course is chosen ; spread
the sail — 665.
- Well, well, at worst, 't is neither theft
nor coinage, 655.
- Were ever such two loving friends !
679.
- Were every hair upon his head a life,
677.
- What brave chief shall head the forces,
640.
- What ! dazzled by a flash of Cupid's
mirror, 670.
- What ho, my jovial mates ! come on !
we'll frolic it, 668.
- What makes the troopers' frozen cour-
age muster, 12.
- What, man, ne'er lack a draught when
the full can, 666.
- What sheeted ghost is wandering
through the storm, 676.
- Wheel the wild dance, 573.
- When autumn nights were long and
drear, 659.
- When beauty leads the lion in her toils,
678.
- When friends are met o'er merry cheer,
651.
- When fruitful Clydesdale's apple bow-
ers, 27.
- When Israel of the Lord beloved, 608.
- When princely Hamilton's abode, 32.

- When Princes meet, astrologers may
mark it, 675.
- When the gledd's in the blue cloud,
595.
- When the heathen trumpet's clang, 592.
- When the last Laird of Ravenswood to
Ravenswood shall ride, 604.
- When the lone pilgrim views afar, 589.
- When the tempest's at the loudest, 649.
- When we two meet, we meet like rush-
ing torrents, 681.
- Whence the brooch of burning gold,
434.
- Where is he? Has the deep earth
swallowed him? 684.
- Where shall the lover rest, 136.
- Wherefore come ye not to court, 669.
- Whet the bright steel, 607.
- While the dawn on the mountain was
misty and gray, 360.
- Who is he? One that for the lack of
land, 654.
- Why, now I have Dame Fortune by the
forelock, 659.
- Why sit'st thou by that ruined hall,
581.
- Why, then, we will have bellowing of
beeves, 672.
- 'Why weep ye by the tide, ladie?'
578.
- Widowed wife and wedded maid, 639.
- Without a ruin, broken, tangled,
cumbrous, 683.
- 'Woe to the vanquished!' was stern
Brenno's word, 657.
- Woman's faith, and woman's trust,
638.
- Yes? I love Justice well — as well as
you do — 655.
- Yes, it is she whose eyes looked on thy
childhood, 664.
- Yes, life hath left him — every busy
thought, 662.
- Yes, thou mayst sigh, 645.
- Yon path of greensward, 679.
- You call it an ill angel — it may be so,
662.
- You call this education, do you not,
661.
- You shall have no worse person than
my chamber, 672.
- You talk of gayety and innocence, 677.
- Young men will love thee more fair
and more fast, 566.
- Your suppliant, by name, 628.
- Youth of the dark eye, wherefore didst
thou call me? 612.
- Youth! thou wear'st to manhood now,
664.

INDEX OF TITLES

[The titles of major works and of general divisions are set in SMALL CAPITALS.]

- ABBOT, THE, mottoes from, 663.
 'Admire not that I gained,' 649.
 Albert Græme's Song, 94.
 Alexandre, M., the celebrated Ventri-
 loquist, Lines addressed to, 636.
 Alice Brand, 243.
 Allen-a-Dale, 338.
 Ancient Gaelic Melody, 604.
 'And did ye not hear of a mirth be-
 fell,' 563.
 Anne of Geierstein, verses from, 645;
 mottoes from, 680.
 Answer to Introductory Epistle, 609.
 Antiquary, The, verses from, 581;
 mottoes from, 653.
 Appeal, The, Epilogue to, 593.
 'As lords their laborers' hire delay,'
 636.
 Avenel, Mary, To, 615.

 Ballads :—
 Alice Brand, 243.
 'And whither would you lead me
 then,' 363.
 Castle of the Seven Shields, The,
 531.
 BALLADS FROM THE GERMAN OF BÜRGER,
 Two, 1.
 Bannatyne Club, The, 632.
 Bard's Incantation, The, 46.
 Barefooted Friar, The, 606.
 Battle of Beal' an Duine, 273.
 Battle of Sempach, The, 596.
 Betrothed, The, songs from, 637;
 mottoes from, 676.
 Black Dwarf, The, mottoes from, 656.
 Black Knight and Wamba, The, 608,
 609.
 Bloody Vest, The, 640.
 Boat Song, 218.
 Bold Dragoon, The, 557.
 Bonny Dundee, 649.

 Border Song, 610.
 Bothwell Castle, 27.
 BRIDAL OF TRIERMAIN, THE, 384.
 Bride of Lammermoor, The, songs
 from, 603; mottoes from, 658.
 Brooch of Lorn, The, 434.
 Bryce Snailsfoot's Advertisement, 627.
 Buccleuch, Duke of, To his Grace the,
 560.
 'But follow, follow me,' 568.
 'By pathless march, by greenwood
 tree,' 642.

 Cadyow Castle, 32.
 'Canny moment, lucky fit,' 576.
 Castle Dangerous, mottoes from, 684.
 Castle of the Seven Shields, The, 531.
 Catch of Cowley's Altered, A, 635.
 Cavalier, The, 360.
 Cheviot, 30.
 Christie's Will, 38.
 Chronicles of the Canon-Gate, verses
 from, 644; mottoes from, 679.
 Cleveland's Songs, 623.
 Coronach, 232.
 Count Robert of Paris, mottoes from,
 682.
 County Guy, 633.
 Crusader's Return, The, 605.
 Cypress Wreath, The, 357.

 Dance of Death, The, 571.
 'Dark Ahriman, whom Irak still,' 639.
 'Dark shall be light,' 577.
 Dead, Hymn for the, 100.
 Death Chant, 645.
 Death of Keeldar, The, 645.
 De Wilton's History, 183.
 Donald Caird's Come Again, 594.
 Doom of Devorgoil, The, songs from,
 648.
 Dying Bard, The, 546.

- EARLY BALLADS AND LYRICS, 9.
 Edward the Black Prince, To the Memory of, 591.
 Epilogue ('The sages — for authority, pray, look'), 635.
 Epilogue to The Appeal, 593.
 Epilogue to the Drama founded on 'Saint Ronan's Well,' 633.
 Epitaph designed for a monument in Lichfield Cathedral, 552.
 Epitaph ('Heir lyeth John o' ye Girnell'), 581.
 Epitaph on Mrs. Erskine, 603.
 Erl-King, The, 9.
 Eve of Saint John, The, 18.

 Fair Maid of Perth, The, verses from, 644; mottoes from, 680.
 'Family Legend, The,' Prologue to, 553.
 Farewell, The, 361.
 Farewell to Mackenzie, 569.
 Farewell to the Muse, 628.
 FIELD OF WATERLOO, THE, 496.
 Fire-King, The, 23.
 Fisherman's Song, The, 623.
 Fitztraver's Song, 95.
 Flora MacIvor's Song, 566.
 For a' That an' a' That, 568.
 Foray, The, 647.
 Fortune, Lines on, 651.
 Fortunes of Nigel, The, lines from, 628; mottoes from, 668.
 Frederick and Alice, 31.
 From the French, 575.
 From Virgil, 651.
 Funeral Hymn, 609.

 Glee for King Charles, 643.
 Glencoe, On the Massacre of, 557.
 Glendinning, Edward, To, 616.
 Glenfinlas, 13.
 Goetz von Berlichingen, Song from, 11.
 Goldthred's Song, 616.
 Gray Brother, The, 21.
 Guy Mannering, songs from, 576.

 Halbert, To (The White Maid of Avenel), 612, 613, 615.
 Halbert's Incantation, 612.
 Halcro and Norna, 621.
 Halcro's Song, 618.
 Halcro's Verses, 624.

 Harold Harfager's Song, 619.
 HAROLD THE DAUNTLESS, 506.
 Harold's Song, 97.
 Harp, The, 359.
 'He came, but valor had so fired his eye,' 581.
 Health to Lord Melville, 549.
 Heart of Midlothian, The, songs from, 595; mottoes from, 657.
 Hellvellyn, 47.
 'Hie away, hie away,' 565.
 Hither we come, 651.
 Host's Tale, The, 138.
 Hour with Thee, An, 643.
 'House of Aspen, The,' songs from, 11.
 Hunting Song, 551.
 Hymns:—
 Funeral, 609.
 for the Dead, 100.
 Rebecca's, 608.
 to the Virgin, 237.

 'I asked of my harp,' 638.
 Imitation (of the Farewell to Mackenzie), 570.
 Imprisoned Huntsman, Lay of the, 278.
 Inscription for the Monument of the Rev. George Scott, 648.
 Invocation ('From thy Pomeranian throne'), 519.
 'It's up Glembarchan's braes I gaed,' 564.
 Ivanhoe, verses from, 605; mottoes from, 659.

 Jock of Hazeldean, 578.
 JUVENILE LINES, 653.

 Kenilworth, song from, 616; mottoes from, 665.
 Kemble's, Mr., Farewell Address, 590.

 LADY OF THE LAKE, THE, 199.
 Lady, To a, 9.
 Lament, 277.
 'Late, when the autumn evening fell,' 564.
 Lay of Poor Louise, The, 644.
 Lay of the Imprisoned Huntsman, 278.
 LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL, THE, 48.
 Legend of Montrose, The, songs from, 604; mottoes from, 659.

- Letters in verse, 560.
 Lines : addressed to M. Alexandre, the celebrated ventriloquist, 636 ; addressed to Ranald Macdonald, Esq., of Staffa, 559 ; on Fortune, 651 ; to Sir Cuthbert Sharp, 643 ; written for Miss Smith, 589.
 Lochinvar, 165.
 Lockhart, Esq., J. G., To, 636.
 'Look not thou on beauty's charming,' 603.
 LORD OF THE ISLES, THE, 421.
 Lord Ronald's Coronach, 13.
 Lullaby of an Infant Chief, 577.
 Lylph's Tale, 389.
- Macdonald, Ranald, Esq., of Staffa, Lines addressed to, 559.
 MacGregor's Gathering, 579.
 Mackrimmon's Lament, 593.
 Madge Wildfire's Songs, 595.
 Maid of Isla, The, 627.
 Maid of Neidpath, The, 548.
 Maid of Toro, The, 547.
 MARMION, 101.
 Massacre at Glencoe, On the, 557.
 Melville, Lord, Health to, 549.
 Mermaids and Mermen's Song, 619.
 MISCELLANEOUS POEMS, 546.
 Monastery, The, verses from, 609 ; mottoes from, 660.
 Monks of Bangor's March, The, 591.
 Moon, Song to the, 315.
 MOTTOES FROM THE NOVELS, 653
 Mortham's History, 346.
- Nigel's Initiation at Whitefriars, 628.
 Noble Moringer, The, 599.
 Nora's Vow, 579.
 Norna's Incantations, 625. The same, at the meeting with Minna, 625.
 Norna's Verses, 620.
 Norman Horse-Shoe, The, 546.
 'Norman Saw on English Oak,' 606.
- Oak Tree, To an, 567.
 Old Mortality, mottoes from, 656.
 On a Thunder-Storm, 653.
 On Ettrick Forest's Mountains Dun, 627.
 On the Massacre of Glencoe, 557.
 On the Setting Sun, 653.
 Orphan Maid, The, 604.
- Palmer, The, 547.
 Peveril of the Peak, mottoes from, 672.
 Pibroch of Donald Dhu, 578.
 Pirate, The, verses from, 617 ; mottoes from, 667.
 Poacher, The, 553.
 Postscriptum, 562.
 Prologue to Miss Baillie's Play of 'The Family Legend,' 553.
- Quentin Durward, mottoes from, 674.
 Quest of Sulstaun Solimaun, The, 582.
- Rebecca's Hymn, 608.
 Redgauntlet, verses from, 635.
 Reiver's Wedding, The, 36.
 Resolve, The, 552.
 Return to Ulster, The, 577.
 Rhein-Wein Lied, 12.
 Rob Roy, song from, 591 ; mottoes from, 657.
 ROKEBY, 302.
 Romance of Dunois, 574.
- Saint Cloud, 571.
 Saint Ronan's Well, mottoes from, 675.
 St. Swithin's Chair, 565.
 Scott, Rev. George, Inscription for the Monument of, 648.
 Search after Happiness, The, 582.
 Secret Tribunal, The, 647.
 Setting Sun, On the, 653.
 Sharp, Sir Cuthbert, Lines to, 643.
 Shepherd's Tale, The, 27.
 Sir David Lindesay's Tale, 151.
 Smith, Miss, Lines written for, 589.
 'Soldier, wake !' 637.
 Soldier's Song, 269.
 'Son of a Witch,' 643.
 Songs : —
 'Admire not that I gained,' 649.
 Albert Græme's, 94.
 Allen-a-Dale, 338.
 Ancient Gaelic Melody, 604.
 'And did ye not hear of a mirth befell,' 563.
 Boat Song, 218.
 Bonny Dundee, 649.
 Border Song, 610.
 Brooch of Lorn, The, 434.
 'But follow, follow me,' 568.
 'Canny moment, lucky fit,' 576.

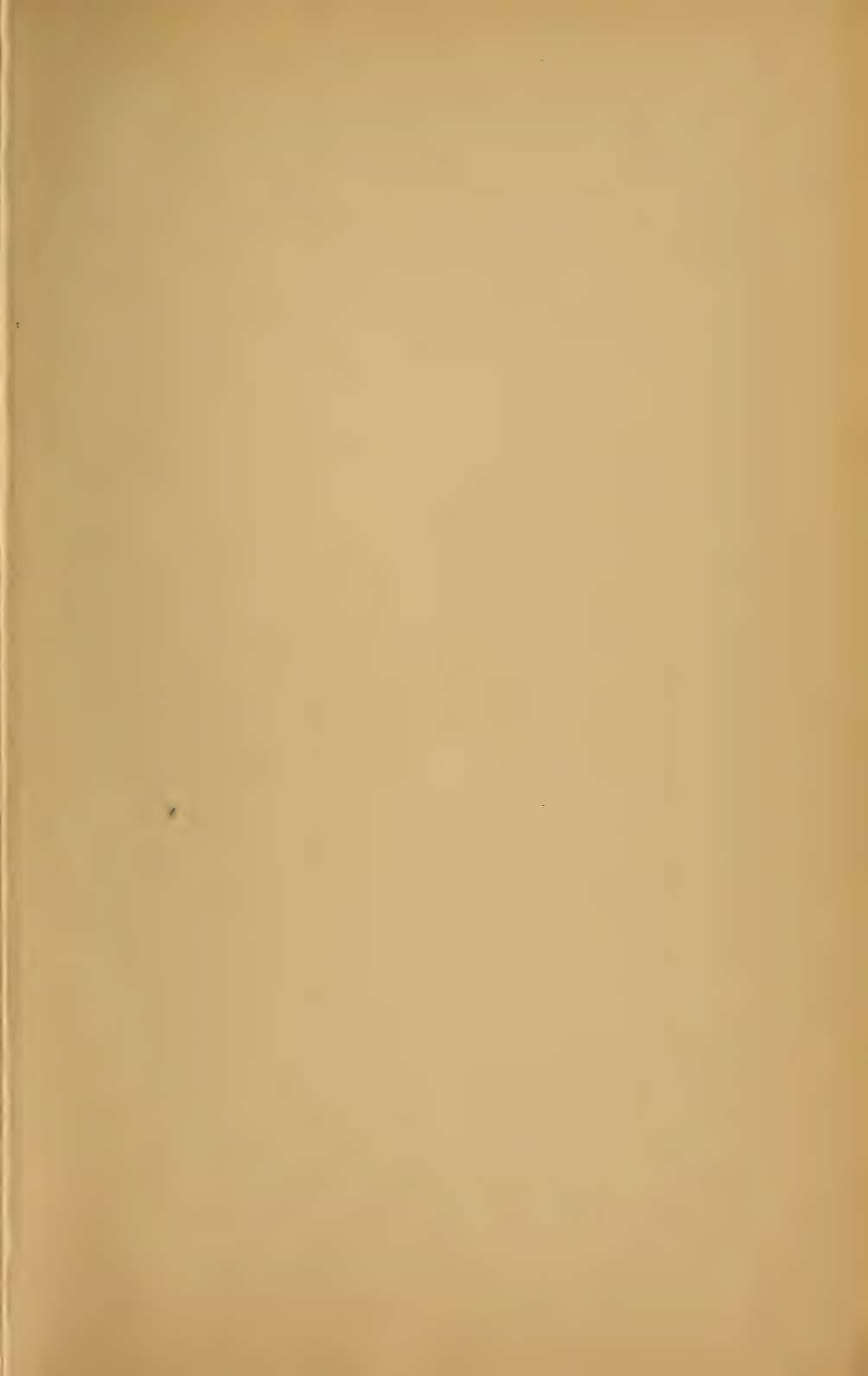
- Cavalier, The, 360.
 Cleveland's, 623.
 Cypress Wreath, The, 357.
 'Dark shall be light,' 577.
 'Donald Caird's Come Again,' 594.
 Farewell, The, 361.
 Farewell to Mackenzie, 569.
 Fisherman's, The, 623.
 Fitztraver's, 95.
 Flora MacIvor's, 566.
 For a' That an' a' That, 568.
 For the Anniversary of the Pitt
 Club of Scotland, 558.
 Glee of King Charles, 643.
 Glee-Maiden's, 645.
 Goetz von Berlichingen, from, 11.
 'God protect brave Alexander,'
 580.
 Goldthred's, 616.
 'Hawk and osprey screamed for
 joy,' 522.
 Halcro's, 618.
 Harold Harfager's, 619.
 Harold's, 97.
 Harp, The, 359.
 'Highland Widow, The,' from, 644.
 House of Aspen, from the, 11.
 'Hie away, hie away,' 565.
 Hunting Song, 551.
 'I asked of my harp,' 638.
 'Ill fares the bark with tackle
 riven,' 524.
 'It's up Glembarchan's braes I
 gaed,' 564.
 Lochinvar, Lady Heron's Song,
 165.
 'Look not thou on beauty's charm-
 ing,' 603.
 'Lord William was born in gilded
 bower,' 515.
 Lullaby of an Infant Chief, 577.
 Madge Wildfire's, 595.
 Maid of Isla, The, 627.
 Mermaids and Mermen, of the, 619.
 Monks of Bangor's March, The,
 592.
 'Not faster yonder rower's might,'
 212.
 Moon, To the, 315.
 'O, Brignall banks are wild and
 fair,' 333.
 'O for the voice of that wild horn,'
 591.
 'O, say not, my love, with that
 mortified air,' 551.
 On the Lifting of the Banner of
 the House of Buccleuch, 575.
 Orphan Maid, The, 604.
 'Quake to your foundation deep,'
 418.
 'Rash adventurer, bear thee back,'
 413.
 St. Swithin's Chair, 565.
 'See the treasure Merlin piled,'
 415.
 'She may be fair,' he sang, 'but
 yet,' 525.
 'Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,'
 210.
 'Soldier, wake!' 637.
 Soldier's, 269.
 'Son of Honor, theme of story,'
 417.
 'Summer eve is gone and past,'
 354.
 Sun upon the Lake, The, 648.
 Tempest, of the, 617.
 'The heath this night must be my
 bed,' 235.
 'The Knight's to the mountain,'
 564.
 'The monk must arise when the
 matins ring,' 603.
 'They bid me sleep, they bid me
 pray,' 247.
 'Twist ye, twine ye! even so,'
 576.
 War-Song, 607.
 War-Song of Lachlan, 570.
 War-Song of the Royal Edinburgh
 Light Dragoons, 10.
 'Wasted, weary, wherefore stay,'
 576.
 'We love the shrill trumpet,' 649.
 'Wheel the wild dance,' 573.
 'When friends are met,' 651.
 'When the last Laird of Ravens-
 wood to Ravenswood shall ride,'
 604.
 'When the tempest,' 649.
 'Where shall the lover rest,' 136.
 White Lady of Avenel, of the
 (Fording the river), 610.
 'Widowed wife and wedded maid,'
 639.
 Woman's faith, 638.

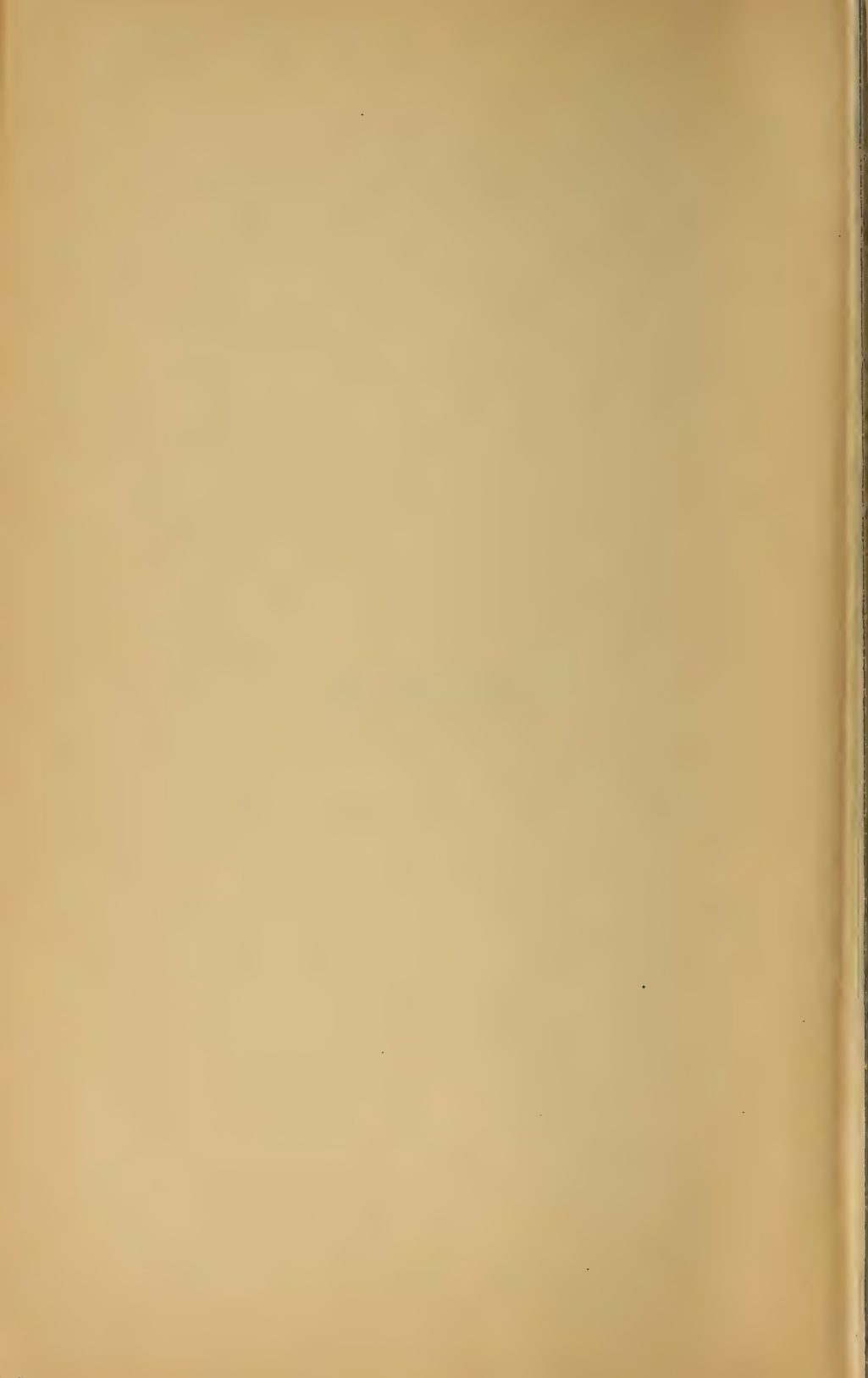
- 'Young men will love thee more
fair and more fast !' 566.
Sun upon the Lake, The, 648.
Sun upon the Weirclaw Hill, The, 591.
- Talisman, The, verses from, 639 ; mot-
toes from, 677.
Tempest, Song of the, 617.
'The herring loves the merry moon-
light,' 581.
'The Knight's to the mountain,' 564.
'The monk must arise when the matins
ring,' 603.
Thomas the Rhymer, 40.
'Thou, so needful, yet so dread,' 625.
Thunder-Storm, On a, 653.
To a Lady, 9.
To an Oak Tree, 567.
To Edward Glendinning, 616.
To Halbert (The White Maid of Ave-
nel), 612.
To his Grace the Duke of Buccleuch,
560.
To J. G. Lockhart, Esq., 636.
To Mary Avenel, 615.
To the Memory of Edward the Black
Prince, 591.
To the Sub-Prior, 611.
Troubadour, The, 574.
'Twist ye, twine ye ! even so,' 576.
- Verses sung at the dinner to the Grand-
duke Nicholas, 580.
Violet, The, 9.
- Virgil, From, 653.
Virgin, Hymn to the, 237.
VISION OF DON RODERICK, THE, 283.
- Wandering Willie, 548.
War-Song, 607.
War-Song of Lachlan, 570.
War-Song of the Royal Edinburgh
Light Dragoons, 10.
'Wasted, weary, wherefore stay,' 576.
Waverley, songs and verses from, 563.
'We are bound to drive the bullocks,'
568.
'We love the shrill trumpet,' 649.
'What brave chief shall head the
forces,' 640.
'When friends are met,' 651.
'When the last Laird of Ravenswood
to Ravenswood shall ride,' 604.
'When the tempest,' 649.
White Lady's Farewell, The, 616.
White Lady of Avenel, Songs of the,
610.
'Why sit'st thou by that ruined hall,'
581.
'Widowed wife and wedded maid,'
639.
Wild Huntsman, The, 5.
William and Helen, 1.
Woman's Faith, 638.
'Woodstock,' verses from, 642 ; mot-
toes from, 678.
'Young men will love thee more fair
and more fast,' 566.

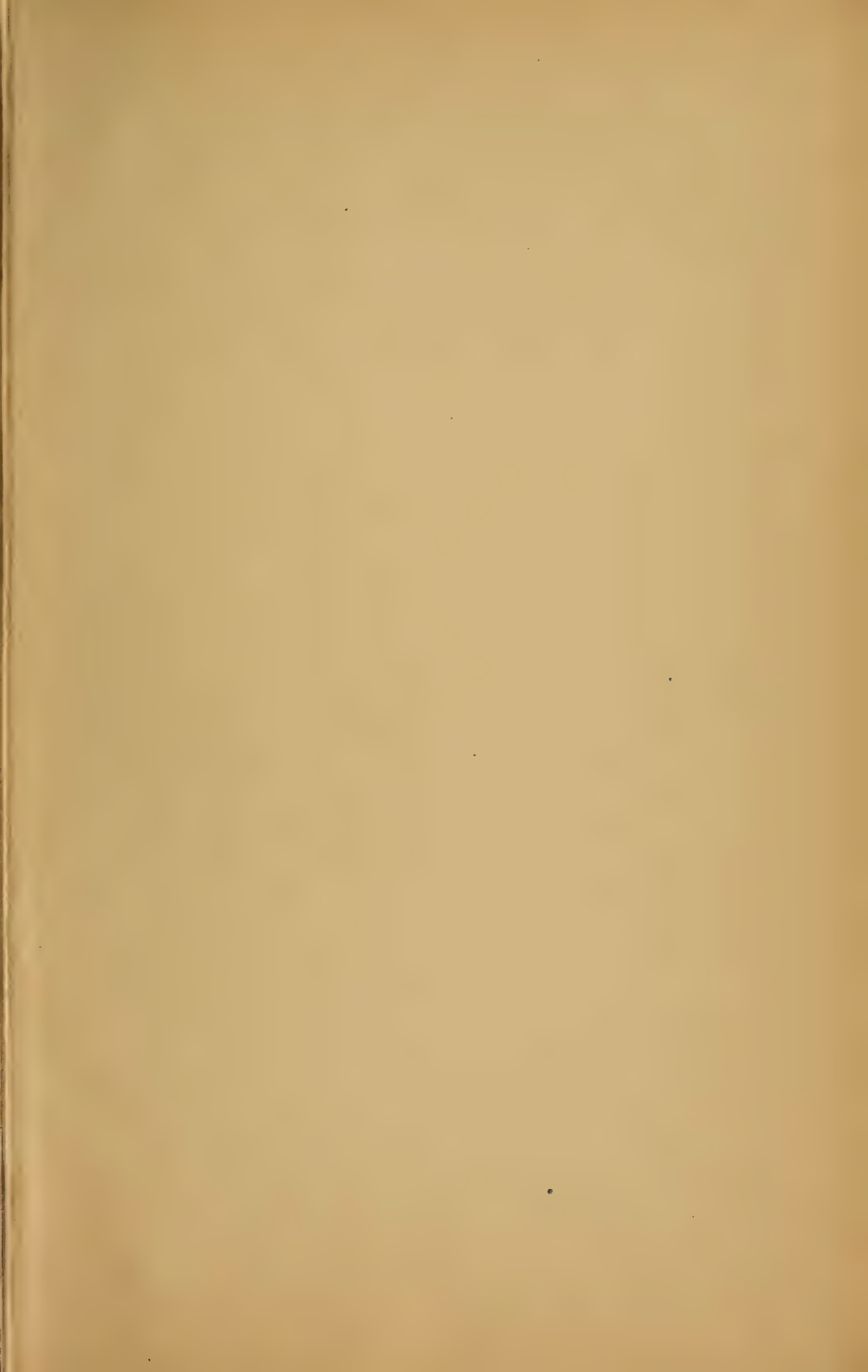
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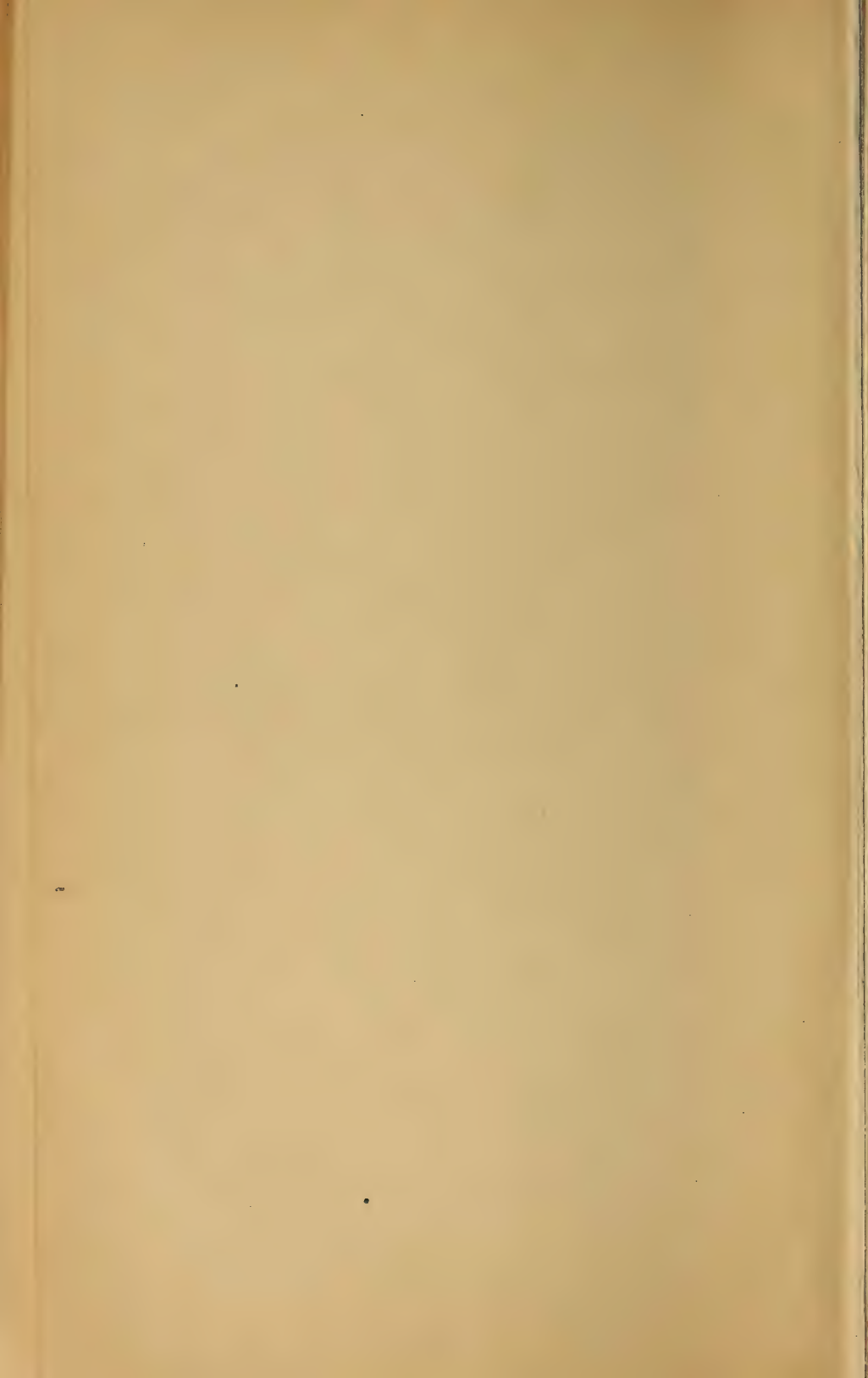
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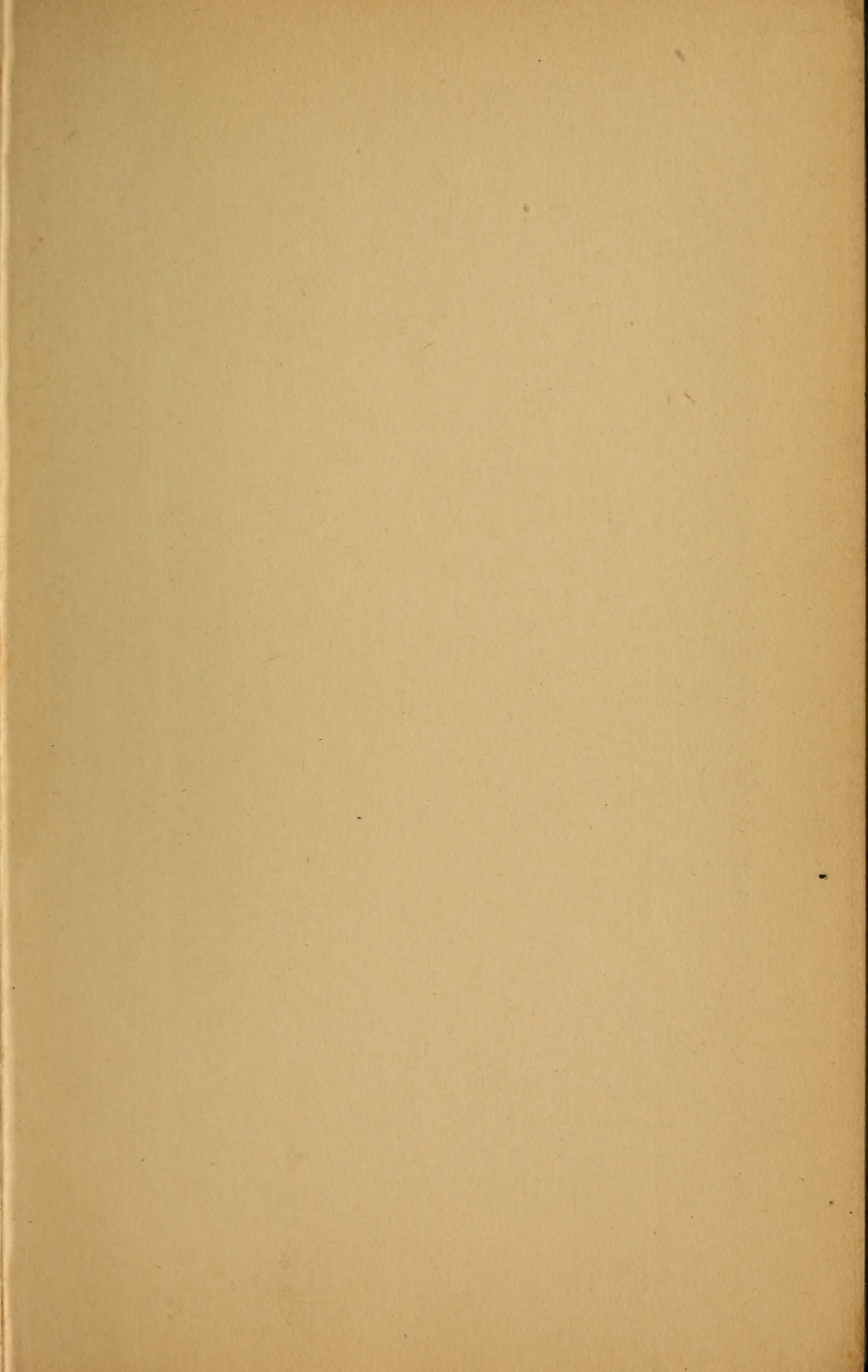
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